

Dr. F. G. G. G.

MUSIC &amp; DRAMA

THE

# GRAMOPHONE

AUGUST 1956

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

*A most colourful exhibit awaits you . . .*

*as well as everything you want to know about records and recorded music . . . at*



## THE RECORD STAND

National Radio and Television Exhibition

**Earls Court—Aug. 22 to Sept. 1**

**"HIS MASTER'S VOICE" · CAPITOL  
COLUMBIA · PARLOPHONE  
and M-G-M RECORDS**

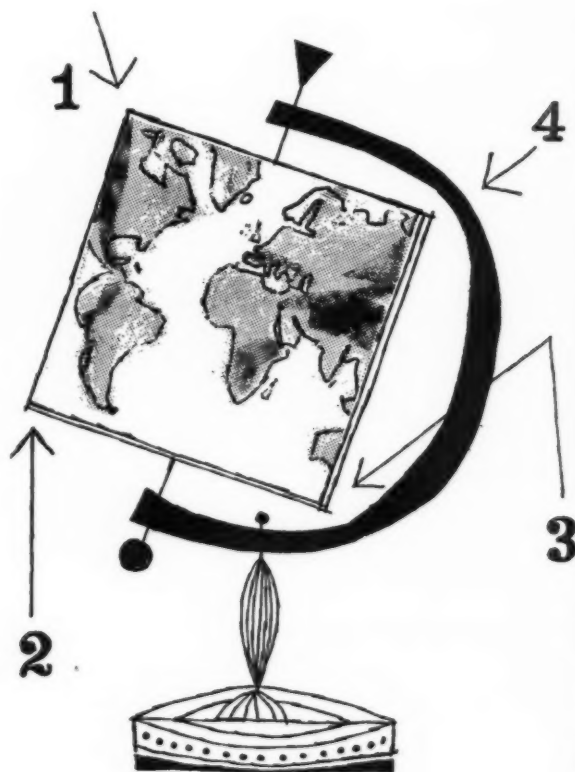
**. . . in the Main Hall—Stand No. 16**

• FAMOUS RECORDING ARTISTS WILL ATTEND DAILY

# Imhofs export records to the four corners of the globe

We are not quite sure  
just where the four corners actually are  
but we have been sending records  
to pretty well every part of the world  
for the last fifty years or so  
and it is fairly safe to assume  
that wherever they may be  
we have sent records there  
at some time or other

**IMHOFS**



If you happen to live in  
a corner of the globe where shops like Imhofs are non-existent (bad luck)  
you will doubtless be overjoyed to hear that Imhofs will post records of any type or make,  
securely packed and in mint condition, to any address you may care to name.  
Our post-by-return record service is operated by experienced assistants who will, if you wish,  
select the best available recording of the work you require.  
Imhofs world-wide reputation is your guarantee of impeccable service at all times.  
May we send you details?



Great artists are heard at their best  
on Decca long playing ffr records



## CLIFFORD CURZON

**A MASTERLY PERFORMANCE . . . A BRILLIANT RECORDING**

RACHMANINOV

Concerto No.2 in C minor for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 18  
Clifford Curzon with The London Philharmonic Orchestra  
conducted by Sir Adrian Boult LXT 5178

GRIEG

Concerto in A minor for  
Piano and Orchestra, Opus 16  
Clifford Curzon with  
The London Symphony Orchestra  
conducted by  
Anatole Fistoulari  
remainder of 2nd side:

FALLA

Nights in the gardens of Spain  
Clifford Curzon with  
The New Symphony Orchestra  
of London  
conducted by Enrique Jorda  
LXT 5165 (available shortly)

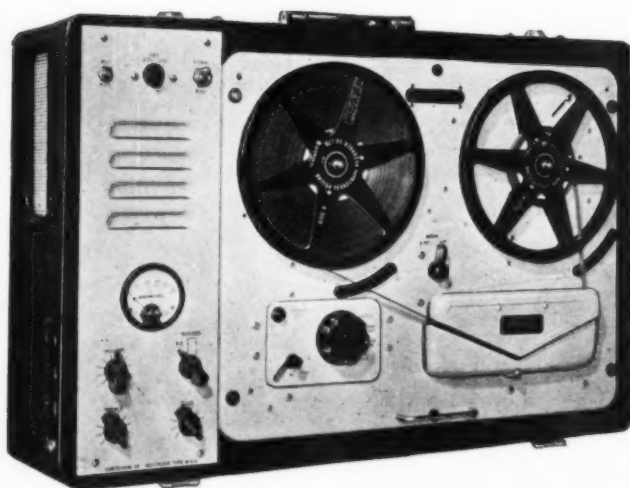
BEETHOVEN

Concerto No.4 in G major for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 58  
Clifford Curzon with The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra  
conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch  
LXT 2948



For full details of all CLIFFORD CURZON's  
long playing and medium play recordings,  
please ask your dealer or write to us for  
the complete Decca-group catalogues of  
microgroove records—the most compre-  
hensive in the world (10/., post free).

# VORTEXION HIGH QUALITY TAPE RECORDER



The amplifier, speaker and case, with detachable lid, measures 8½ in. by 22½ in. by 15½ in. and weighs 30 lb.

**PRICE, complete with WEARITE TAPE DECK.....£84 0 0**

★ The total hum and noise at 7½ inches per second 50-12,000 c.p.s. unweighted is better than 50 db.

★ The meter fitted for reading signal level will also read bias voltage to enable a level response to be obtained under all circumstances. A control is provided for bias adjustment to compensate low mains or ageing valves.

★ A lower bias lifts the treble response and increases distortion. A high bias attenuates the treble and reduces distortion. The normal setting is inscribed for each instrument.

★ The distortion of the recording amplifier under recording conditions is too low to be accurately measured and is negligible.

★ A heavy mumetal shielded microphone transformer is built in for 15-30 ohms balanced and screened line, and requires only 7 micro-volts approximately to fully load. This is equivalent to 20 ft. from a ribbon microphone and the cable may be extended 440 yds. without appreciable loss.

★ The 0.5 megohm input is fully loaded by 18 millivolts and is suitable for crystal P.U.'s, microphone or radio inputs.

★ A power plug is provided for a radio feeder unit, etc. Variable bass and treble controls are fitted for control of the playback signal.

★ The power output is 3.5 watts heavily damped by negative feedback and an oval internal speaker is built in for monitoring purposes.

★ The playback amplifier may be used as a microphone or gramophone amplifier separately or whilst recording is being made.

★ The unit may be left running on record or playback, even with 1,750 ft. reels, with the lid closed.

**POWER SUPPLY UNIT** to work from 12-volt Battery with an output of 230 v., 120 watts, 50 cycles within 1%. Suppressed for use with Tape Recorder. **PRICE £18 0 0**

## FOUR CHANNEL ELECTRONIC MIXER

is almost essential for the professional or semi-professional where a number of different items have to be mixed on one tape recording.

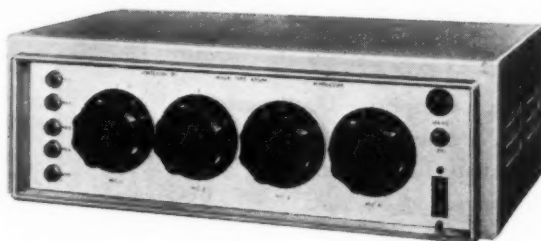
It is recommended by a number of tape recorder manufacturers for this purpose.

Any normal input impedance can be supplied to order, balanced or unbalanced, the standard being 15-30 ohms balanced.

The normal output is 0.5 volt on 20,000 ohms or less, but 600 ohms is available as an alternative. The steel stove enamelled case is polished and fitted with an engraved white panel suitable for making temporary pencil notes.

An internal screened power pack and selenium rectifier feed the five low noise non-microphonic valves.

Used in many hundreds of large public address installations and recording studios throughout the world.



**PRICE**  
**£36 15 0**

*Manufactured by*

**VORTEXION LIMITED, 257-263 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, S.W.19**

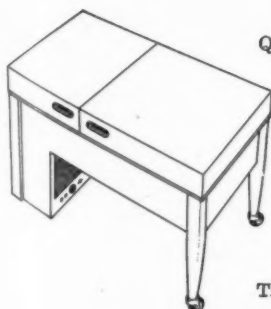
Telephones: LIBerty 2814 and 6242-3

Telegrams: "Vortexion, Wimble, London"



# Designed for the **QUAD II**

by J. Christopher Heal F.S.I.A.



This cabinet is designed to house the  
QUAD II Amplifier, Control Unit, FM Tuner and  
suitable record player—each unit being  
skilfully placed to give full  
and effective control even from the  
comfortable depths of your armchair.

- Control Unit & FM Tuner tilted to give greater visibility and easier control.
- The Amplifier is fixed in a well-ventilated lower compartment.
- The lid covering the control panels opens to provide space for sorting records.

The price of the cabinet *only*, in Mahogany and Rosewood, is £30—obtainable direct from

**HEAL'S, 196 Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1** or through your local Hi-Fi suppliers



**HUNTINGDON, HUNTS • Telephone : HUNTINGDON 361**

# BROADCASTER

## STYLUS SAPPHIRE NEEDLES

for replacements

HEAD OR CARTRIDGE ILLUSTRATION	SHAPE	CATALOGUE No.	APPLICATION
		T.T. (78 r.p.m.)	Trailer or Bent Shank for both Crystal and Magnetic Pick-ups.
		S.T. (78 r.p.m.)	Straight for both Crystal and Magnetic Pick-ups.
		L.W.T. (78 r.p.m.)	Lightweight for Miniature Pick-ups.
		TC4 L.P. (33 1/2/45 r.p.m.) STD. (78 r.p.m.)	Use with B.S.R. TC 2 and TC 4 Turnover Cartridges. Fitted to B.S.R. Monarch and Regent Players.
		HGP 37 L.P. (33 1/2/45 r.p.m.) STD. (78 r.p.m.)	Use with ACOS GP 37 Series (Brown) Turnover Cartridge and with HGP 37 Garrard, and HGP 37 Collaro and HGP 37 Monarch.
		HGP 59 L.P. (33 1/2/45 r.p.m.) STD. (78 r.p.m.)	Use with HGP 59 (White) Turnover Cartridge. Fitted to B.S.R. TU 8, HF100 and Monarch Players.
		GP 19 L.P. (33 1/2/45 r.p.m.) STD. (78 r.p.m.)	Use with ACOS GP 19 Series HGP 35, HGP 39, HGP 41 and HGP 45 Cartridges and with GP 20 Series Pick-ups.
		GC 2 L.P. (33 1/2/45 r.p.m.) STD. (78 r.p.m.)	Use with Garrard GC2 and GCE C Turnover Cartridges.
		C 54 L.P. (33 1/2/45 r.p.m.) STD. (78 r.p.m.)	Use with Collaro Studio O and P Turnover Cartridges.

### IMPORTANT

The quality and condition of your needle is a vital part of reproduction. For the best results it is essential to replace needles periodically.

PRICE  
**6'3**  
EACH  
TAX PAID

**BROADCASTER (Regd.) SAPPHIRE NEEDLES AND STYLI** can be self-changed. This chart will assist you in selecting the correct needle for your instrument.

A product of **J. & A. MARGOLIN LIMITED**

**PLUS-A-GRAM HOUSE, 112-116 OLD STREET, LONDON, E.C.1**  
Telephone: CLERkenwell 2133



## What the reviewers say about the RD JUNIOR...

This month we have devoted our advertisement to extracts from reviews which have appeared dealing with the RD JUNIOR Amplifier and Control Unit. Written by acknowledged authorities in the high fidelity field they speak for themselves...

"This amplifier has deservedly established a high reputation for itself. Wherever I have wandered during the past year, I have found universal praise for it from dealers and others who have had an opportunity of putting it through its paces."

"The amplifier is inherently stable under quite adverse conditions of load, and this means not only that high output power can be maintained with low distortion over the whole frequency range, but that the condition of stability will persist even as the valves and other components begin to age. No wonder the makers can afford to give 'an unconditional two-year guarantee against faulty materials or workmanship'."

"I like the provision for altering the feedback matching by means of a plug-in unit to suit different output impedances."

"The control unit has also been designed to give the utmost that can be expected from an economical unit. It only uses one double triode valve and yet gives not only half a dozen different input arrangements and independent treble and bass controls (the former continuous, the latter in steps) but also a variable steep-cut treble filter without the use of chokes."

"In performance the amplifier has given no surprises: just the clear, crisp... effortless power that one expected from its specification. Which means that it takes a place as one of the best three or four 10-watt amplifiers that are available on the British market at present."

(The above extracts are taken from TECHNICAL REPORT by P. Wilson, M.A., in the July, 1956, issue of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

"It can be truthfully stated that the RD JUNIOR is an established product and is widely used as the basis of many average domestic high fidelity systems. For this reason it was chosen by us as one of the equipments installed for record playback purposes in the Gramophone Record Review demonstration room at the London Audio Fair."

"The units are constructed on steel chassis heavily primed and stove enamelled in an attractive dark maroon. The components are of first-grade with the valve and associated components in the control unit mounted on a floating sub-chassis to avoid microphony. The workmanship is superb, and the neat wiring lay-out can be seen in our under-chassis view."

"Listening quality is of a high order and I found the controls, particularly the low pass filter used in conjunction with the treble tone control, flexible enough to cope with modern LPs, old or worn 78s, and poor radio transmissions. Apart from the electrical and mechanical features of this design, the purchaser will be given confidence by the fact that the manufacturer is willing to supply complete circuit diagrams and component lists and guarantee the apparatus (excluding valves) for a period of two years."

"This RD JUNIOR Amplifier/Control Unit exemplifies a much sought after, but not so often achieved, combination of high quality with moderate price."

(The above extracts are taken from HOME TEST No. 27 by Donald W. Aldous in the July, 1956, issue of The Gramophone Record Review.)

"The two units comprising the 'Cambridge' amplifier... provide a small amplifier system suitable for most home applications where the power requirements are not so severe as to warrant an amplifier of 25, 30 or more watts."

"In addition, there are two jacks on the front panel. . . . This makes it possible to use the Cambridge with a portable tape recorder with a minimum of connection difficulty."

"The control unit is quite small, being only 1 1/4" deep behind the panel, which is 8 1/2" by 5 1/2". A feature unique to this amplifier is its availability in four panel colours—red, ivory, black or bronze. . . . This permits the user to select colours most suitable for use with his particular decor and cabinet style."

"It (the main amplifier) is a relatively small unit, yet sufficiently large to permit neat and careful workmanship. . . ."

"A semi-fixed presence control . . . improves intelligibility with certain types of speaker systems, and 'brightens' up the response with practically any speaker."

"Large coupling capacitors and adequate bypassing of input and power stage cathodes result in an exceptionally stable amplifier."

"On subjective listening tests, the Cambridge gave a good account of itself. Its controls give a satisfactory degree of range for both bass and treble, and the availability of a filter is a desirable feature. . . . On the whole, it is a well built amplifier and performs most satisfactorily."

(The above extracts are taken from an Equipment Report appearing in the April, 1956, issue of the American magazine, AUDIO ENGINEERING. The report also included an Intermodulation/Power Output (60 and 7,000 cps. mixed 4:1). Performance Curve showing .5% at 10 watts and approximately 2% at 12 watts: these remarkably good figures, far more significant than any harmonic distortion figures, were the result of independent tests).



### PRICES:

AMPLIFIER £17

CONTROL UNIT £9

A 12-page illustrated Booklet devoted solely to the RD JUNIOR Amplifier and Control Unit, together with reprints of the full reviews appearing in The Gramophone and The Gramophone Record Review, post free on request. Send also for details of companion equipment in the RD JUNIOR Home High Fidelity System—the RD JUNIOR FM Unit and RD JUNIOR Corner Horn enclosure.

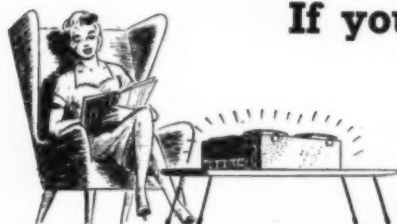
Arrange a demonstration with your local Hi-Fi dealer.

**ROGERS DEVELOPMENTS (ELECTRONICS) LTD.**

"RODEVCO HOUSE" . 116 BLACKHEATH ROAD . GREENWICH . LONDON, S.E.10

Telegrams: RODEVCO GREEN LONDON

Telephone: TIDeway 1723



If you love music—you'll love the new

# ELIZABETHAN *de Luxe*

TAPE RECORDER

*incorporating the Collaro Tape Transcriptor*

The new Elizabethan has everything. Three speeds 15, 7½ and 3½ in. per sec.; press-button track changeover; over three hours playing time; internal mixing; plays pre-recorded tapes to perfection; these attractions and many others are all included in this superb new tape recorder.

The connoisseur will appreciate the tone value and reproduction capacity which is equivalent to professional standards, for, make no mistake, the Elizabethan de Luxe is undoubtedly a machine for the real lover of fine sounds in speech or music.

See your nearest dealer today and ask him to demonstrate the new Elizabethan de Luxe portable tape recorder—you'll agree that it's "just what you've been waiting for".



**65** GNS.  
including M.C. and  
1800 ft. of Long  
Play Tape

The  
Elizabethan 56  
twin speed is also  
available at 52 gns.

Please indicate the machine which interests you.

Please send me  
FREE fully  
illustrated  
brochure  
as marked

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

ELIZABETHAN de Luxe ☐ ELIZABETHAN 56 ☐

DHB 2651



(TAPE RECORDERS) LTD.  
9 Field Place, St. John Street, London, E.C.1

## Knowing what's where

Call it pride if you like, or expertise, or just plain service—our assistants make it their business to know the record catalogues from Albeniz to Zipoli. Most gratifying this, when you come to The Gramophone Shop with an unusual request and a train to catch. Quietly reassuring always. If you've time to listen to your records you will hear them in the greatest comfort, played on our special equipment. If any record is not in stock but still in print, we'll get it for you as fast as anyone in London—perhaps faster. Often the same day.

(OVERSEAS CUSTOMERS, PLEASE NOTE:  
Christmas orders can never be placed too soon)

★ All LP records are sent post free to addresses in Great Britain

The Gramophone Shop

RECORDS GRAMOPHONES RADIO  
TELEVISION TAPE RECORDERS

130 SLOANE STREET, LONDON, S.W.1. (SLOane 9001)

Come by bus (11, 19, 22, 46, 137) or to Sloane Square Station

## HI-FI FOR THE NORTH/EAST

LANCASTER HI-FIDELITY COMPANY (of Manchester)

The North's Genuine Sound Reproduction Specialists, have pleasure in announcing the opening of a Branch in

### COUNTY DURHAM

with direct delivery service to Stockton, Middlesbrough, Sunderland, Newcastle, etc. under the management of

ROBERT H. HOYLE

Mr. Hoyle is a keen Record Collector and Audio enthusiast, and will be happy to meet N/East Music-lovers to discuss the reproduction of music and modern high fidelity equipment.

- Commodious shop displaying — BOOKS RECORDS. EQUIPMENT CABINETS ACCESSORIES STYLIS etc.
- Audition Showroom with DIRECT COMPARISON switch for hearing various Loudspeakers and Amplifiers.
- Consultations with Audio Engineer H. Higham; full use of Manchester service and Research dept.
- Quality Equipment by—ROGERS : LEAK : ACOUSTICAL : SOUND SALES : DYNATRON : WHARFEDALE : GOODMANS : CHAPMAN : GARRARD : COLLARO : CONNOISSEUR : EAP : etc.
- TAPE RECORDERS — Ferrograph; Simon' Tapes and microphones stocked.

L.H.F

105 YORK ROAD  
WEST HARTLEPOOL

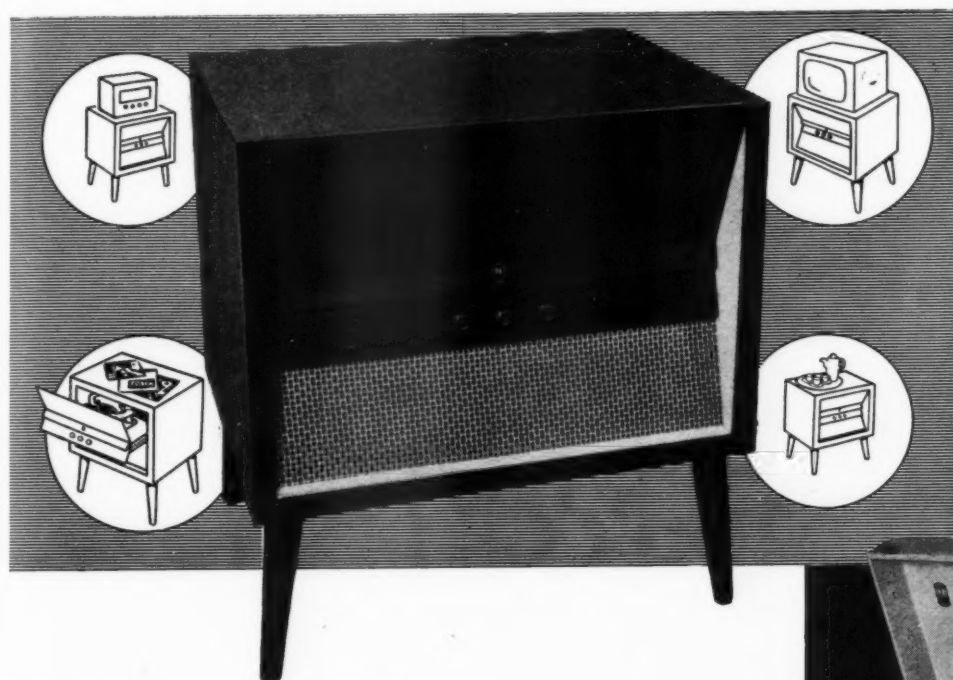
PHONE: HARTLEPOOL 2764



# E A R

## '1960'

### RECORD REPRODUCERS



see them  
at the  
**Radio Show**

EARLS COURT  
AUG. 22nd—SEPT. 1st

stand

# 67

#### THE "1960" CHAIRSIDE REPRODUCER

Fresh and original in conception, the E.A.R. "1960" is an experienced design for the experienced listener, with all the advanced technical features implicit in its name. The "1960" looks well . . . fits well . . . in any home. The ideal companion for table T.V. (bringing the set to correct viewing height) or radio. Fitted with large (10 in. by 6 in.) high flux elliptical speaker. Ball bearing filing cabinet type drawer.

**33 gns.** (Inc. P.T.)

#### FEATURES of the "1960" REPRODUCERS

- 4-speed Mixer Record Changers.
- Independent bass and treble boost controls. ★
- E.A.R. Amplifier with multiple feedback network.

★ The great flexibility of control made possible by this refinement enables you to extract the best from all records, and compensates for the considerable variations in recording standards.

Hear them at your dealer  
or write for illustrated folder

... a landmark in



## contemporary listening!

Dept. G. ELECTRIC AUDIO REPRODUCERS LTD.  
THE SQUARE · ISLEWORTH · MIDDX. · 'PHONE: HOUNSLOW 6256-8



#### THE "1960" PORTABLE REPRODUCER

Only E.A.R. could produce a portable as attractive as this . . . plus luxury features and a luxury case . . . at **25 gns** (Inc. P.T.)

- Twin concealed elliptical speakers.
- New unit construction.
- Outstanding case design.

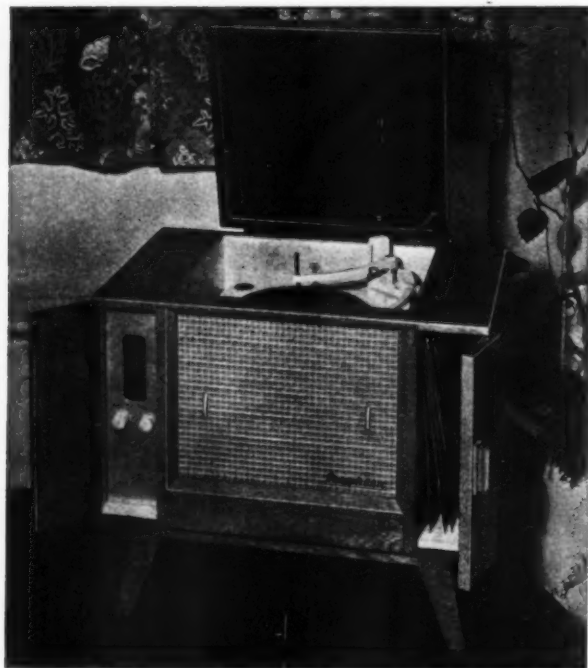
# Pamphonic for sound—NATURALLY!

Here are two outstanding Record Reproducers each giving the usual high quality Pamphonic Performance...

## "WESTCOTT"

A negative feedback amplifier with the new Collaro RC54 High Fidelity record changer and 'Studio O' pickup for 78, 45 and 33 $\frac{1}{2}$  r.p.m. records. Fitted with automatic stop and record selection. Specially designed loudspeaker gives purity of sound—no 'wow' or 'rumble'. External volume and treble controls. Contemporary designed cabinet with storage space for 50 records. Dimensions: 23" high, 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide, 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep.

price **OAK £35.15.6** and **£13.15.5 P.T.**  
**de luxe Sapele Mahogany £36.11.6**  
 and **£14.1.6 P.T.**



Illustrated technical leaflets will be sent on request—either phone or write.

## "PANDORA"

New Collaro RC54 High Fidelity record changer and 'Studio O' pickup with negative feedback amplifier for all records: 78, 45 and 33 $\frac{1}{2}$  r.p.m. Strong bass response and High note diffusion. Twin elliptical speakers. Automatic stop and selection of records. This table model is finished in beautifully grained Walnut veneer and will give the High Quality Pamphonic Performance. Dimensions: 18" wide, 14" deep, 12" high.

price  
**£31.16.0**  
 and **£12.4.10 P.T.**



## "FM TUNER" model 631

The illustration shows the FM Tuner fitted in the left-hand compartment of the Westcott. Capable of covering the whole range of the B.B.C. VHF stations, this FM Tuner gives added enjoyment. Although this tuner has been designed for easy fitting in the Westcott, it can operate with any well-known reproducer.

price **£13.13.0** and **£5.5.1 P.T.**

[Power Pack £4.0.0 extra]

**PAMPHONIC REPRODUCERS LIMITED**  
 17 Stratton Street, London, W.1 Tel.: GROsvenor 1926



When Richard Tauber died at the age of fifty-six, the world lost one of its best-loved singers. In his day, Tauber was a lyric tenor without peer. He was the ideal Franz Lehár hero: operetta suited him down to the ground, though few specialist lieder singers could have approached his loving interpretations of Schubert songs. He made records, appeared in plays and films, packed the Albert Hall time and again, and even found the energy to compose operettas and serious symphonic works.

## THE ART OF

**RICHARD TAUBER****Great Tauber Songs**

Wolgalied; Serenade;  
O maiden, my maiden; Wayside Rose;  
You are my heart's delight;  
Girls were made to love and kiss;  
Waltz Song.....all by Lehár  
Serenade.....Schubert  
Vienna, city of my dreams.....Sieczynski  
PMB1006

**Songs of Old Vienna**

(Sung in German)

I'm in love with Vienna;  
Tales from the Vienna Woods;  
Roses from the South.....Strauss and  
Blossoms red and white.....Weill  
A Waltz Dream.....Oscar Straus

Greetings! Vienna!;  
Come Gypsy.....Kálmán  
Where the Danube embraces  
dreaming Vienna.....Strecher  
Yearning for you.....Stolz PMB1007

**Songs of Stage and Screen**

My heart and I.....Tauber  
One alone.....Romberg  
The English Rose.....German  
We'll gather lilacs.....Novello  
Lover, come back to me.....Romberg  
One day when we were young  
Long ago and far away.....Gershwin  
Sympathy.....Frml  
Dearly beloved.....Kern  
Can I forget you.....Kern PMB1009

**PARLOPHONE 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  r.p.m. Long Playing Records**

THE PARLOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED, RECORD DIVISION, 9-11 GREAT CASTLE STREET, LONDON, W.1

**Connoisseur 3 SPEED MOTOR****The turntable with a 4% variation on all 3 speeds**

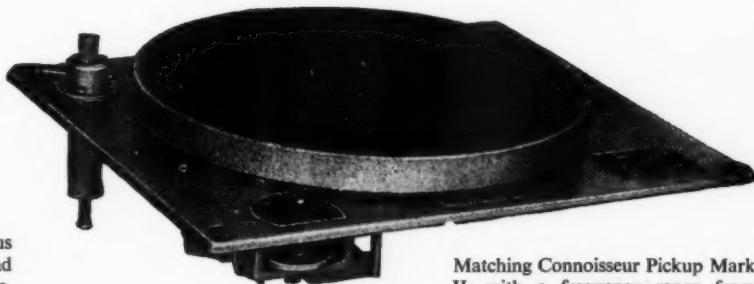
The Connoisseur motor is made for the perfectionist. It is one of the finest turntables in the world.

The speed change is arranged mechanically and gives a 4% variation on all speeds. A synchronous motor, which is virtually vibrationless with low noise level and hum induction, maintains a constant speed at all settings. There is no braking action to obtain speed change.

The 12-in. turntable is lathe turned in non-ferrous metal. The main spindle, which is precision ground and lapped to mirror finish, runs in phosphor bronze bearings.

A sound, precision engineering job, the Connoisseur motor provides the foundation for perfect reproduction.

Price £20, plus P. Tax £8 11s. 0d.



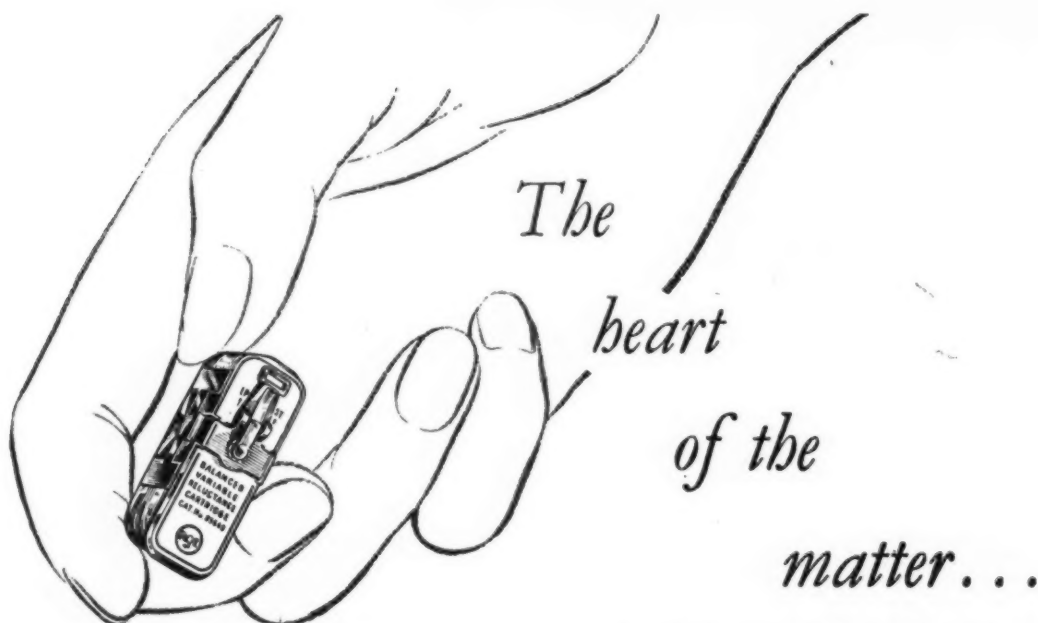
Matching Connoisseur Pickup Mark II, with a frequency range from 20-20,000 cycles: Pickup complete with 1 head fitted with Diamond armature, £8 19s. 0d., plus P. Tax £3 16s. 6d.

**A. R. SUGDEN & CO. (ENGINEERS) LTD.**

Telephone: Halifax 69169

Well Green Lane, Brighouse, Yorkshire

Telegrams: Connoisseur, Brighouse



The RCA New Orthophonic High Fidelity Pick-ups are built around an entirely new 8-pole balanced variable reluctance cartridge.

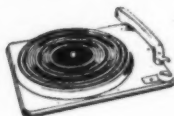
A special feature of the design, which represents a completely new departure in gramophone disc reproduction, is the change-over mechanism. The single cantilever construction of the dual stylus model, completely eliminates the mechanical resonance previously experienced with normal type turnover Pick-ups. The dual styli are both mounted on the one cantilever and the change-over from one stylus to the other is effected by a positive toggle action.



RCA Pick-ups are available with single or dual stylus cartridges with diamonds and sapphires, and a choice of two arm lengths. The long arm models will track records up to 16" in diameter, and the normal length arm tracks any record up to 12" diameter. The Pick-ups will fully load any normal High Fidelity amplifier without the use of a step-up transformer. A tracking pressure selector is built-in on all models, with an adjustable pedestal to suit any height of turntable.



F/M TUNER



TRANSCRIPTION DECK



PRE-AMPLIFIER



MAIN AMPLIFIER



LOUDSPEAKER



*New Orthophonic High Fidelity*

Hear RCA at the Radio Show Stand 103, Demonstration Room D.14

RCA GREAT BRITAIN LTD. (DEPT. HFL), LINCOLN WAY, WINDMILL ROAD, SUNBURY-ON-THAMES, MIDDLESEX.

TEL: SUNBURY-ON-THAMES 3103

(An Associate Company of Radio Corporation of America)



## This Record Business

We are asked many questions by correspondents concerning our Record Mail Service. Some are answered below and may well meet your queries too.

▶ **How long has Quality Mart sold records?**

We are a comparatively young firm, though our principals have been engaged in the gramophone trade for many years. In May, 1951, we advertised our post free Record Service for the first time in these pages.

▶ **Do you specialise in any particular type of record?**

We can claim to cover the complete field. Serious records preponderate but popular and jazz record sales are substantial and we try to give each type of customer informed service.

▶ **I have to wait a long time for many records I order locally. Can you improve on this?**

Both retailers' and wholesale stocks are continually moving. Naturally some records are out of stock with both from time to time, new issues often delayed after reviews appear. But we get daily deliveries to serve your demands. No dealer is better placed to supply the "out of the rut" title than we are, excepting deleted or second-hand copies.

▶ **What about "24 Hour" and "Return of Post" service?**

Though a good proportion of orders can be met at once, such general claims cannot in present supply conditions be other than misleading in our view.

▶ **And about "Factory Fresh" records?**

We were probably the first advertiser to use the phrase, which factually means that only unplayed copies are sold. Besides this every copy is examined and cleaned at the time it comes into stock, an exacting and expensive operation but essential to safeguard the customer.

▶ **What are the GARDISK bags you use?**

Introduced before the general use of polythene covers we have found these quite invaluable and still need to substitute these full-size rounded base envelopes for the exiguous protection afforded by some makers, especially for 45s. We started this added service to the customers at some expense before competition from others who have followed our lead.

▶ **What of postal risks to records?**

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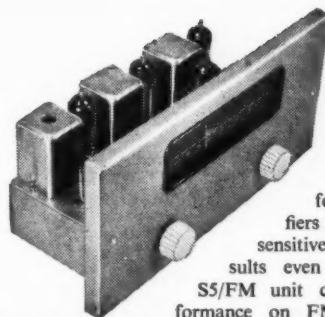
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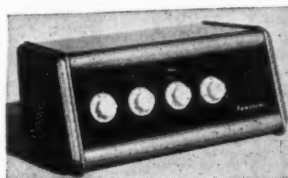
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# THE GRAMOPHONE

AUGUST, 1956 - VOL. XXXIV - No. 399

Incorporating VOX THE RADIO CRITIC . BROADCAST REVIEW

Edited by SIR COMPTON MACKENZIE CHRISTOPHER STONE London Editor CECIL POLLARD

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## RECORD RETROSPECT

By PETER HEYWORTH

CONFRONTED with the vast mass of new issues in the last half-year, the only possible course is self-indulgence. Here then are comments on a handful of the records that have most interested me in the past months.

We tend to think of neo-classicism as a characteristic trend in the period between the wars, although by the end of the nineteenth century the era of rococo had already acquired a sufficient aura of nostalgia for Puccini and Tchaikovsky to use a pastiche of its mannerisms as period background in *Manon Lescaut* and *Pique Dame*. But it was Stravinsky who got neo-classicism going as a movement, and then, as soon as the minor apes of the musical worlds (no names, no pack-drill) had taken up the cry, promptly turned elsewhere. For Stravinsky neo-classicism was never more than a passing phase and thus it never became for him a *cul-de-sac* as it did for a number of others. On the other hand, no one has ever put eighteenth century to usage so enchanting, fresh and witty as he did in *Pulcinella*. This delicious ballet suite is available on a Philips disc (ABL3091), and in spite of some poor and rather chastely intellectual singing, it is played with great precision and liveliness by the Cleveland Orchestra under the composer himself. While on the topic of Stravinsky I should perhaps mention the stunning D.G.G. (DGM18189) recording of *The Rite of Spring* (I've never heard a percussion section so magnificently reproduced); and also Decca's recording of *Oedipus Rex* (LXT5098), which the Hamburg Opera are doing in Edinburgh this month. I would suggest, however, that anyone who is considering this record and is not a hi-fi bigot, should also listen to the Philips issue conducted by the composer (ABL3054). Unlike most of my colleagues, I find this a more pungent and dramatic affair than Ansermet's reading on Decca. And the recording, although indifferent, was made in the days when Martha Mödl was still content to sing mezzo-soprano roles, and a magnificent Jocastra she is.

Stravinsky in his *Pulcinella* mood is a delicious, tart *apéritif*. But now for more solid fare. The other day I picked up with a minimum of enthusiasm a Telefunken

recording of Reger's *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Hiller* played by the Hamburg Philharmonic under Keilberth (LGX66049). By the time I had played it through, however, I was eager to hear more music by Reger, whom until then I had, I must confess, assumed to be rather a bore. Of course these variations are slow in movement, but they are much less massive than I had expected, so that their combination of highly chromatic harmony and elaborate counterpoint is considerably less cumbersome and congested than I had imagined. Indeed, on occasions the music has a touch of the freshness that we associate with Hindemith in the early 'twenties. Apart from the fugue, in which Keilberth allows his strings to swamp the rest of the orchestra so that full brass only penetrates properly at *ff*, the performance and recording are good.

Nowadays there is no longer any need to make out a case for Bruckner. Two new recordings of his vast *Eighth Symphony* have recently appeared—van Beinum conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra on Philips (ABL3086-7), and Horenstein conducting the Pro Musica Symphony Orchestra of Vienna on Vox (PL9682-1/2). Although it is one side longer, I have no hesitation in saying that Horenstein on Vox is the one to have. Van Beinum is stiff and stodgy, while Horenstein, who has a magnificent grasp of the pulse, phrasing and general idiom of the music, gets a most eloquent performance. D.G.G. have issued what is technically a wonderful recording of the *Ninth Symphony* in which the Bavarian Radio Orchestra is conducted by Eugen Jochum (DGM18247-8). He gets a number of exciting orchestral effects, but they remain effects and do not fit into their context in the music. I found the whole affair had a rather displeasing air of theatre and fudged-up romanticism, and here again I would say that Horenstein's fine performance on Vox (PL8040) (cheaper if not so splendidly recorded) is far truer to the music. The D.G.G. set also contains the *Te Deum*, but this is indifferently sung and recorded.

The twentieth century also has its romantics. Shostakovich is one of the few living composers who is able both to con-

tinue the tradition of the large, expansive romantic symphony, and yet to do it in a manner that is individual and original in idiom. I say "is able" because some of his symphonies have been rhetorical and heavily monumental. But the Tenth, his latest, is in the main an impassioned and exciting piece that should please those who complain that contemporary music is obscure and esoteric. I didn't, however, find Kurtz's performance with the Philharmonia on H.M.V. (ALP1322) as exciting as Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, who get a more brilliant but less spacious recording on Philips (ABL3052). Dallapiccola's *Canti di Liberazione* on the other hand is in an "advanced" idiom, but I would most warmly recommend it to anyone who has a taste for something out of the ordinary. It is given a splendid performance by Markevitch on a Columbia disc (33CX1353), which unfortunately also contains a singularly vapid collection of modern French and Brazilian pieces.

The Mozart bicentenary has brought a host of recordings of his music, of which I have heard only a fraction. Perhaps I was unlucky, but looking back there are precious few that stick in my mind or that seem to call for special mention. Kleiber's *Figaro* (Decca LXT5088-91) is of course an exception. Measured against this triumph of stylistic artistry, Gui's Glyndebourne set on H.M.V. (ALPS1312, ALP1313-5) fades into oblivion in spite of better singing and the theatrical liveliness which is the mark of Carl Ebert as a producer of a cast that had sung the opera together on the stage. A performance of the E flat Wind Quartet played by Gieseke and the Philharmonia Quartet on a Columbia disc (33CX1322) is very successful, and the *larghetto*, in particular, is ravishing in the phrasing and the quality of the sound these admirable players produce. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's recital of Mozart songs on Columbia (33CX1321) are beautifully done with great variety of mood, and a Philips disc (ABL3089) that contains selections from the early opera *Thamos König in Aegyptien* is worth attention for some of the choruses are remarkable both in themselves and in the foretaste they give of *The Magic Flute*. Finally Solomon, accompanied a little flatly by the Philharmonia Orchestra under Herbert Menges, plays the famous A major (K.488) and C minor (K.491) concertos with limpid tone and splendid rhythmic

movement on an H.M.V. disc (ALP1316) that is good value for money.

Several recent recordings of oratorios have in particular taken my fancy. The D.G.G. recording of *The Creation* (DGM18254-6) is an especially successful issue. There are moments when Igor Markevitch's conducting seems a little over-delicate and even mincing for Haydn's robust spirit. But the choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral in Berlin sing with great beauty of tone and remarkable sensibility. Kim Borg makes a magisterial Raphael (as well as a tender Adam) and Irmgard Seefried, after pecking at notes in the earlier part, finally sings out ecstatically as Eve. The recording is first class and the whole performance captures the wonderful glow of happiness that permeates the music.

If *The Creation* is an outpouring of thankfulness for the blessings of life, Brahms's *German Requiem* is a sombre meditation on the implacable approach of the tomb. It is a work that can all too easily sound heavy, grey and monotonous, as indeed it does in a performance conducted by Fritz Lehmann on D.G.G. (DGM18258-9). More recently, however, H.M.V. (ALPS1351-2) have issued on three sides (as against four on D.G.G.) a most deeply felt and moving performance conducted by Kempe, who here shows all his striking ability to keep a pulse running through the slowest music. The orchestral playing of the Berlin Philharmonic is absolutely lovely in its precision and tenderness, and Elisabeth Grümmer's singing is particularly affecting for its utter lack of affectation. Fischer-Dieskau is the baritone soloist and I need hardly say that he gives a rapt performance, at once meditative and impassioned, that penetrates to the very core of this anguished music.

Berlioz is commonly regarded as a supreme contriver of orchestral fireworks. We too easily overlook the fact that he is also a supreme and highly original melodist as well as a writer of much music that is limpid and delicate. It is this aspect of his fascinating genius that is to the fore in *L'Enfance du Christ*, which is now available on two Philips discs (NBL5022-3), whose tonal characteristic of clarity rather than of sumptuousness well suit music that in spite of its intense romanticism is far from fat in texture. The performance, in which the Little Orchestral Choral Art Society (American bodies, I take it) are conducted by Thomas Schermann, is neat and competent if not inspired. Léopold Simoneau sings well, but Mary Davenport's heavy, untidy contralto is unpleasing.

Finally, and perhaps outstanding, among this small group of oratorios is a D.G.G. Archive recording (APM14036-8) of the *St. John Passion*. This performance is given by the Thomanerchor (the choir of the Leipzig church where Bach was for long the organist) and the Gewandhaus Orchestra conducted by the late Günther Ramin. I found this an intensely satisfying affair, for it seems to me to combine *Werktreue* with an intensely live and dramatic expression. Ramin uses small forces in comparison with, for instance, Dr. Jacques, and the result seems to me to justify this. For by using a

modest sized choir he is able to let us hear every detail of the instrumental writing, and he is able to avoid that heavy, blanketing of choral tone that makes so many English performances of Bach's choral music sound like an elephant going through a circus turn designed for a deer. Thus this Leipzig performance not only has clarity, it has remarkable animation, *brio* and rhythmic bite. A further advantage, to my mind, is the fact that treble and alto parts are sung by boys. Admittedly they have fleeting moments of uncertainty and occasionally they fail to make their parts heard. But how completely delightful is their vocal quality, at once robust and innocent, and how engaging is the evident relish and dramatic life that they bring to the music. Apart from Ernst Haefliger's Evangelist the soloists are not remarkable, but in the matters of general style and of balance this is a performance that ought to be heard by anyone concerned with oratorio. It seems that Eastern Germany has little to offer in the way of music at present, but a series of Bach choral concerts by this combination should make an exciting feature at, say, an Edinburgh Festival.

Finally a word about the British Council, who subsidise the recording of any English music that might otherwise not appear to the commercial companies as a profitable undertaking. In the main the Council

applies its fund to contemporary music and rightly so, for a recording is in some ways the most effective means of getting new English composers known abroad. Thus they have recently issued with H.M.V. a recording by the Amadeus Quartet of Matyas Seiber's Quartetto Lirico and Tippett's Second String Quartet (ALP1302). The Amadeus players are much more successful in the Seiber, a highly skilled and intriguing work that in the last resort seems to me to lack any very personal idiom. In the Tippett they are far too smooth and glossy, with the result that the work's angular rhythmic force is ironed out. The other recent British Council recording is a performance of Butterworth's song cycle, "A Shropshire Lad" (H.M.V. DLP1117). There is no ground for condemning the Council because this is not contemporary music, for they do not confine themselves to this field. But, much though I personally enjoy Butterworth's slight but charming talent, the music is a little provincial and is certainly unlikely to persuade young Swedes and Swiss that they have up to now been missing something remarkable. But what about a little Holst—the Double Violin Concerto for example? His music is scandalously neglected by recording companies who leap with uncritical alacrity on any piece that falls from the pen of Vaughan Williams.

## LETTER FROM AMERICA

By HAROLD C. SCHONBERG

ORDINARILY this Letter is typed in a smoke-filled room in New York City—a room opening to the vista of a lovely chimney surrounded by a group of old flats. At this moment of typing, however, the following vista unfolds: a spacious green lawn; an oak so tall that the sky is pushing it sideways; a cypress with grasping fingers right out of a Disney cartoon; roses pink and red and yellow; a triumphant flower border filled with specimens that a sidewalk-bred New Yorker cannot hope to identify. I am a little uneasy in such surroundings. I hear no traffic, and the birds make a noise that is positively thunderous; threatening, even.

But it is good to be back in England after a lapse of twelve years. The last time, when I had more hair and less weight, England (as the saying then went) was kept from sinking into the sea only by the barrage balloons holding it up. These days, of course, there probably are as many tourists as there were then soldiers. Not even one barrage balloon, however; and it is a thrill to see what Trafalgar Square looks like with light playing on the fountains. One wondered, during those blackout nights in 1943.

And it has been an educative experience to meet with some of THE GRAMOPHONE critics. Up to now they have existed in my mind as a comprehensive set of initials bounded by the four sides of a magazine

sheet. In more than one way they were a mystery. We American critics often have been somewhat disconcerted by the reception that some of our best-thought-of records have met in these pages. For many years we have respected and in many cases admired the reviewers of THE GRAMOPHONE—admired them for their background, for their scholarship, for their painstaking treatment of the music, for the trouble they take to make comparative surveys; even, in some cases, for their writing ability. And yet, in so many instances, there is a mighty cleavage between American and British critics. We seem to hear the same things differently.

Now there is, of course, such a thing as a national school of criticism. Artists who cannot make headway in America may be received with enthusiasm in France; musicians whom the Press in England merely tolerate may make a big career in America. An orchestra that may suit American standards may be received with the utmost coolness in London; and several orchestras of European renown have failed to impress American audiences in recent years.

The point is that all critics and audiences bring to musical performances their own background and conditioning. We may like to think that criticism is an objective art—and it must be, up to a certain point—but at basis we hear with ears that are

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different from the ears of any person alive. Goodness knows that the problem is complicated enough in the concert hall. On records it is even worse, because our ears are completely at the mercy of the reproducing equipment upon which the record is played.

Thus it was no surprise to talk to THE GRAMOPHONE critics and find them acutely worried about the non-musical factors of equipment and its use. We in America went through that phase in 1948, as soon as the LP process was introduced, and are still going through it. For despite the fact that electronic equipment is fairly standardized, especially the high-priced components, there still exists a great deal of tonal variation from machine to machine, and a record played on one machine may sound entirely different from the same record played on another. In addition, the same record may sound different on the same machine in another location. For room acoustics vary, and a special tone-control setting can sound entirely different in another room. On top of all this, it is an established fact that not many listeners know how to handle their equipment to best advantage. Which is no surprise, considering that much present-day equipment has the complexity of a panel in an atomic plant.

The words "high fidelity" seem to be very much in the British consciousness, and those words apparently are as little understood as they are in America. Hi-fi is *not*—and this cannot be too strongly stressed—a mere extension of the upper and lower frequency ranges. It means natural as opposed to distorted sound reproduction. A machine that can ascend to 15,000 c.p.s. is not necessarily better than a machine that cuts off at 12,000 cycles. It may be a good deal worse if it distorts those upper frequencies. But ever so many people listen to screechy violins under the mistaken notion that they are listening to high-fidelity. They turn the treble control to maximum and boost the bass as far as it will go. What results is always distortion of one kind or another.

Another mistaken notion is that quality increases as price increases. Yet some of the highest-priced speaker systems I have heard, both in America and England, have been monstrosities. Certainly they will reproduce sounds above the threshold of hearing, and certainly they respond to low frequency sounds that play hob with one's internal economy. But what do these speakers sound like? Artificial beyond belief. It is said that all sound engineers are tone deaf, a statement which may be unjust to an eminent profession—and yet some of the sound engineers are doing everything possible to make the statement true.

In general I find American gramophone equipment a little more flexible than British equipment. Many British sets seem to be mainly geared to the British recording characteristic, whereas most American sets have no trouble reproducing British discs. I suspect that one reason why the British critics so often disagree with their American opposite numbers is not

because of anatomical differences in the structure of the human ear but because of electronic differences in the structure of the playback equipment. Especially is this true in the case of loudspeaker systems; and I would back a system with one well-designed twelve-inch speaker in a large infinite baffle against all of the fancy horn-loaded jobs in England and America. (Well, nearly all the horn-loaded jobs. I have heard a couple that give honest reproduction.)

As for the records themselves, I have been delighted with the quality of the British product. In America I hear only domestically-pressed discs and do not often get the chance to listen to the British originals, which are smoother pressings and apparently possessed of superior ingredients. Records from virtually every company these days are quality products, and it is my (admittedly unsubstantiated) feeling that they are better than the equipment which reproduces them. It is heard so often that "modern high-fidelity equipment emphasises the deficiencies of long-playing records". But could it not be that modern LP discs emphasise the deficiencies of most high-fidelity equipment?

Among the things that have not changed in England are certain immutables like Westminster Abbey and the nature of symphonic programmes. The last concert I heard in England during the war days featured Solomon as piano soloist in the Brahms D minor Concerto, and the first one I heard on my return last May featured Solomon as piano soloist in the Brahms D minor Concerto. Not even in New York are the programmes so stereotyped—the same round of Beethoven odd-numbered symphonies, the same old piano and violin concertos, the weary standbys week in and week out. The conventional nature of London musical programmes stands out all the more because there is so much of it. Around May, the city of New York goes to sleep for the summer (musically speaking), and about the only symphonic music to be heard takes place during the six-week season at Lewisohn Stadium. But in London during May there were several symphony orchestras, ballet companies, seasons of opera, concerts, chamber music events—all very exciting to a visitor until the programmes were read. So I went to the theatre instead, or to friends' houses to hear records.

Elsewhere in Europe it is quite difficult to find high-fidelity equipment. Vienna has dimly heard about the hi-fi phenomenon, but if there is one decent components house in the city it has escaped my notice. Most people there play records on combination table-model radio-phonographs. ("Look!" they proudly say. "Five speakers!") Italy, for the most part, is content to hear vocal music on 78 r.p.m. discs. France is producing a fantastic number of fine LP discs, but the price of decent equipment puts it far outside the means of the average Parisian (and the few so-called hi-fi gramophones that I heard suffered badly from high-frequency distortion). Denmark's ideas

about hi-fi consists largely of combination radio-phonograph combinations with ceramic cartridges and speakers mounted in the same cabinets (with the back of the cabinet generally open). Ditto Sweden. At least, those are the impressions gathered from a two-month tour of the continent.

As far as I can see, it is only in England and America that a really fine components industry flourishes. Here the buyer can get the best—if he knows what he is looking for and is not talked into purchasing an electronic gadget rather than a machine that is intended to reproduce great music with fidelity. Certain amplifiers and speakers made in England have justly achieved world-renown (though I have strong doubts about the worth of certain highly-touted phonograph cartridges manufactured here; but by the same token some of America's most expensive cartridges are "hi" but not "fi").

In any case, LP and hi-fi are here to stay, even if stereo tapes are just around the corner. Which means more and more records, and more and more joy for the consumer, and more and more problems for the reviewer. Comparative reviewing—that is, comparing a new release with all of its predecessors—used to be a joy. Now it has developed into a chore. But it is a chore that must be done if the reader and, indeed, the critic himself, is to benefit. Will science come to our aid, and build into us electronic memory banks? The reward will be a free one-year subscription to this magazine.

A word about a confusing sentence in my last *Letter*. I was discussing the disc of Chabrier piano music played by Ginette Doyen and spoke about an allied disc played by Joerg Demus. In case anybody has gotten the idea that Chabrier composed a Theme and Variations let me state that the name of the composer was inadvertently dropped, and the sentence should read: "Somewhat allied (nationally, at any rate) is the disc of *Fauré* piano music played for Westminster by Joerg Demus". It is a disc worth having, too.

#### Index and Binding, Volume XXXIII

The Index to Volume XXXIII will be available towards the end of this month, price 2s. 6d. plus 4d. postage. Copies may be ordered in advance from 49 Ebrington Road, Kenton, Middlesex.

As before, arrangements have been made for the binding of this volume. The price, including Binding Case and Index, will be 22s. 6d. (or 20s. without Index). Copies for binding should be forwarded to reach our Trade Office at 11 Greek Street, London, W.1, by September 1st. Unless otherwise requested, copies will be bound without the advertisement pages. Readers who are forwarding copies and require us to supply the Index are requested to reserve a copy in advance to avoid disappointment.

A number of separate Binding Cases will be available, price 5s. 6d. post free. Unless otherwise requested these cases will only be suitable for binding the volume, less advertisement pages.



# LETTER FROM FRANCE

By IGOR B. MASLOWSKI

WHILE commenting, a few months ago, on the release by Columbia of an abridged "Collectors' Series" version of Gustave Charpentier's *Louise*, I had expressed my surprise that no complete, hi-fi recording was available of this work which, with *Faust* and *Carmen*, is certainly the most popular opera among French opera-goers. It seems that such a recording was in preparation by Philips and it has been released now, on three luxuriously presented discs, coinciding with *Louise*'s thousandth performance, on 23rd June. Jean Fournet conducts the Chorus and Orchestra of the Opéra-Comique while the four main parts are sung by Berthe Monmart, André Laroze, Solange Michel and Louis Musy. These four artists are certainly the very best among French singers that could have been selected for *Louise*, while, as far as Fournet is concerned, this is undoubtedly his most successful piece of operatic conducting. Another great opera from Philips is Prokofiev's *Love for Three Oranges*, a first recording, in Russian, by the soloists, chorus and orchestra of the Ljubljana Opera under Bogol Leskovich. While the accents of the Yugoslav singers may sound un-Muscovite to a Russian-speaking listener, their "presence", their dramatic sense and the quality of their voices are beyond doubt. Philips's other outstanding releases are a definitive, complete recording by the Budapest Quartet of Mozart's "Haydn" Quartets; Brahms's Double Concerto by the New York S.P.O. under Walter, with Stern and Rose—a three-star performance, coupled with the Academic and Tragic Overtures, a splendid buy indeed, the *Moonlight*, *Appassionata* and *Pathétique* Sonatas of Beethoven, played by Hans Richter-Haaser of Germany, who is to make a complete recording of Beethoven's Piano Sonatas; and a new *Musical Offering*, recorded in Vienna, with Isolde Ahlgrimm, L. von Peersman, Alice and Nikolaus d'Harnoncourt, Rudolf Baumgartner and Kurt Theiner.

Until recently there was no complete recording in France of Beethoven's Violin and Piano Sonatas, and the Tenth, Op. 96, was altogether missing from our LP catalogue. Les Discophiles Français have now filled the gap with a four-disc set by Lili Kraus and Willy Boskovsky. While one may prefer isolated versions of a few of the Sonatas, I cannot think of a complete set of such unity and musicianship. In their ambitious recording plan of Brahms's non-symphonic music, D.F. have released, by Yves Nat, the *Variations on a theme of Handel* coupled with the Rhapsodies, Op. 79, and the Intermezzi, Op. 117. All three performances are to be put on the "not-to-miss" list. Mozart has not been forgotten by D.F., and the French Wind Ensemble under J.-P. Rampal has recorded on two discs alert, witty readings of the Serenades, K.361, 375, 388, and the Adagios, K.410 and 411.

From Pathé comes an inspiring disc of French Church Music, de Lalande's *De Profundis* and Lulli's *Dies Irae* under Louis Martini and Mmes Angelici, Cellier, Collard, Messrs. Giraudeau and Noguera. Pathé-Vox have a complete recording of Vivaldi's *Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invenzione* by the Stuttgart Pro Musica Group under R. Reinhardt, with R. Barchet. While Reinhardt's tempi may seem rather slow to some after recent Vivaldi recordings by I Musici and Virtuosi di Roma, I find great charm in these leisurely readings. And sonically, this three-disc set is something to rave about. For Pathé-Vox, too, José Falgarona has made a well-balanced, authentic recording of Granados's *Goyescas*.

Two interesting vocal discs come from La Voix de son Maître: a reissue in the "Collectors' Series" of an operatic recital by José Luccioni, and, by Victoria de los Angeles and the Boston S.O. under Münch, masterly performances of Debussy's *La damoiselle élue* and Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'Été*. Columbia's most interesting record of the month (besides numerous recordings from the London studios) is a Bach recital by Samson François. This is a romantic, but very attractive reading of the Toccata and Fugue in C, the Prelude and Fugue in A and two Chorals, in Liszt and Busoni transcriptions.

The late Claude Delvincourt's Sonata for Violin and Piano is performed with much feeling and virtuosity by Maurice Crut and Lucette Descaves (Ducretet-Thomson). Other worth-while records from D.T. are Debussy's *Suite Bergamasque* and *Pour le piano* by Albert Ferber, as good as Gieseking or anybody else could have done; and the two Mozart Flute Concertos (with the Adagio, K.515, as fill-in) by the Pro Arte Chamber Group under Kurt Redel, who is also the soloist.

Erato's July release is headed by Bach's *Magnificat*, by the same ensemble and the Chorale Philippe Caillard, again under Redel. This is, in my opinion, the best recording ever made of this masterpiece.

Ginette Doyen has recorded for Véga two discs of rare piano pieces: Chopin's *Boléro*, *Tarentelle* and *Écossaises* are featured on one, Ibert's impressionistic *Histoires* on the second. The performances are of a superior quality.

## Correction

Professor Denis Stevens asks us to point out that the edition of Gibbons's *The Cries of London*, recorded on D.G.G. Archive APM14056 and reviewed in our May number, was the one prepared by him and published by Novello and not, as the card stated, the one published by Schott and edited by Herbert Just and Francesca Allison: also that the work is complete in two parts. A.R.'s review suggested there might be more.

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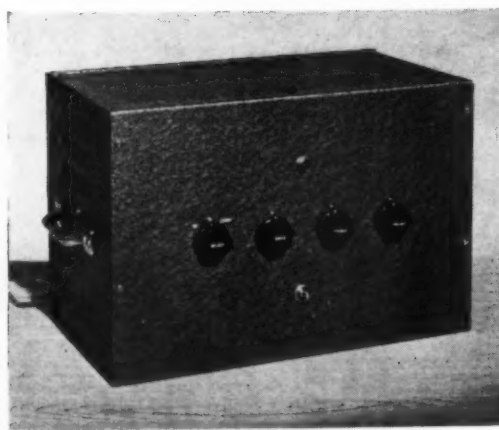
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## ANALYTICAL NOTES AND FIRST REVIEWS

By

PAUL BRYANT . ROGER FISKE . TREVOR HARVEY  
 PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE . MALCOLM MACDONALD . ANDREW PORTER  
 ALEC ROBERTSON . LIONEL SALTER



### ORCHESTRAL

**AUBER. Overtures: Fra Diavolo; The Black Domino. Lamoureux Orchestra (Paris) conducted by Jean Fournet.** Philips NBE11036 (7 in., 11s. 10d.).

*The Black Domino* concerns a nun who spends her evenings at parties in disguise; if the overture has a weakness, it is that Auber's music, dedicated to the spirit of parties, has here occasional leanings towards spending part of its time in disguise at convents. In *Fra Diavolo* joy is more unconfined, of course; here the nineteenth-century ancestors of Abbot and Costello would scarcely have allowed any prolonged solemnity in the music.

Even so, Auber's gay tunes are scarcely set off to the very best effect by the *Lamoureux Orchestra*, who have on other occasions played with rather greater neatness and point. Just as Philips, on other occasions, have recorded with rather more body; after a brilliant side-drum opening solo I was a little disappointed in the sound of the tutti. But Auber-fanciers feeling the necessity of a *Black Domino* overture might well consider this, the only currently available version, to be a very reasonable interim measure. M.M.

**BLISS. A Colour Symphony. Introduction and Allegro. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Arthur Bliss.** Decca LXT5170 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

Having nobly done its duty towards Vaughan Williams by recording the bulk of his major works, Decca now seems to be turning its attention to another distinguished

figure in English musical life, the present Master of the Queen's Music. Until recently he had fared none too well in the gramophone catalogues—on LP were available only the Second String Quartet, the Piano Concerto, the *Miracle in the Gorbals* Suite and *Music for Strings*. In June, however, we had the *Theme and Cadenza* for violin and orchestra and the Violin Concerto; and now, having given us (in the last-named) Bliss's most recent composition, Decca has gone back to his earlier career.

The *Colour Symphony* was his first large-scale orchestral work, and was written for the Three Choirs Festival in Gloucester in 1922: with poetic justice, the orchestra chosen to record it now is that which gave the first performance on that occasion (are there, I wonder, any of the early players still with it?). In the original score the movements bore, beside the designations Purple, Red, Blue and Green, sub-titles relating these colours to their heraldic significance ("Purple, the colour of amethysts, pageantry, royalty and death", etc.); but when Bliss revised the symphony ten years later, he cut out this "programme" so that the music should be listened to on its own terms. Heard to-day, in this full-blooded performance under the composer, one is conscious of his disciplined exuberance at thirty years old, and of the distance he has travelled since: there are moments nevertheless—the dissonant syncopated passage in *Red*, the "optimistic" second fugue in *Green*—which point forward to his fully mature style.

To-day he would probably thin out the scoring (though I hope he would leave the exciting six-timpani flourishes near the end): indeed, the tendency towards a more clean-cut texture is already seen in the other work recorded here, the *Introduction and Allegro* dedicated to Stokowski (who conducted the first performance in 1927 in Philadelphia). This is a work which has practically disappeared from the concert repertoire: is it merely because Elgar has made the title peculiarly his own? Though in this, as in

the Symphony, there are fleeting moments when ensemble could have been better (why, for example, do the brass find the crotchet triplet in the *Purple* movement so troublesome?), the composer secures a convincing performance from the L.S.O., and the recording is perfectly good, if not quite in the same class as that of the Violin Concerto. L.S.

**BRAHMS. Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73. Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80. Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult.** Pye-Nixa NCL16001 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

Symphony No. 2

L.P.O., Furtwaengler	(1/52) LXT2586
N.B.C. S.O., Toscanini	(11/52) (H)ALP1013
V.P.O., Schuricht	(3/54) LXT2559
Concertgebouw, Beinum	(1/55) ABL3020
N.Y. S.O., Walter	(4/56) ABL3095

This particular series of the Brahms symphonies is progressing well indeed: to it Boult now adds a fine version of the Second. Again he gives a warm performance, beautifully controlled—most effective, perhaps, in the first two movements, both of which are given a most rewarding lyrical impulse. The third movement seems rather less ready to give up all its secrets; in it rather prominently-recorded bassoons do tend to damp down some of the lighter woodwind chords. The finale gets under way again, though, with readiness, and steadily builds up a most exciting climax.

Throughout there is faultless playing, and recording of a very high standard. These qualities illuminate, too, the fill-up, the *Academic Festival Overture*. Here Boult's tempos are on the moderate side, and the result is almost consistently to reveal fresh beauties in the music—less rushed, and played as well as this, Brahms's rhythms seem altogether clearer and more effective than usual. Perhaps the title has much to answer for: in endeavouring to make the piece sound festive we habitually miss much of its almost entirely non-festive quality. In one small detail, though, this present performance seems to me to be half-hearted: no endeavour is made to modify Brahms's antique scoring of the first C major passage, with the result—so often heard—that the second half of that tune recedes into the far distance.

The general excellence of both Symphony and Overture make this a record to be considered carefully alongside even the strongest of its competitors. This seems to me to be Bruno Walter's Philips—a glowing performance, recorded comparably well with the new issue, and including the Haydn-Brahms Variations as fill-up. Perhaps even warmer in performance is the van Beinum Philips; but that is fractionally less well recorded, and in having no fill-up at all now seems somewhat expensive. The listener preferring a Toscanini version is also considerably better served in the matter of recording than he is on some other occasions, but that H.M.V. record could scarcely be considered competitive, in sound, with these other versions of the Brahms.

Between the new issue and the Walter/Philips choice of fill-up might well decide

the day. And it may be worth pointing out that Pye-Nixa do offer a solution to cross-coupling problems: their versions of the First, Second, and Fourth Brahms symphonies are all satisfactory ones, and produce as fill-ups the *Tragic Overture*, *Academic Festival Overture*, and Haydn-Brahms Variations respectively. I do not know whether the Third Symphony is on its way, but it seems very likely: and if so it could scarcely include a fill-up duplicating those of any of the others. In any event, good versions of the Third, on its own, are available already. M.M.

**BRAHMS. Concerto in A minor for Violin, 'Cello and Orchestra. Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80. Tragic Overture, Op. 81.** Isaac Stern (violin), Leonard Rose ('cello), Philharmonic - Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. Philips ABL3139 (12 in., 38s. 3d.).

*Concerto in A minor:*  
de Vito, Baldovino, Philharmonia, Schwarz (10/53) (H)BLP1028  
Fournier, Janigro, Vienna Op., Scherchen (6/54) WLP20019

This record comes to fill a real need, and it is not often that one can say that nowadays. But neither of the previous versions of Brahms's Double Concerto could be considered as more than a stop-gap—whereas this is a magnificent performance.

The Double Concerto, Brahms's last orchestral composition, is a work that seems more and more impressive, more satisfying, as one gets to know it better. Rudolf Schwarz, in his recording, tends to stress the warm, lovable, Viennese side of the piece, making it faintly sentimental, and also a trifle dull. Scherchen concentrates on its picturesque quality, and on such dramatic contrasts as it affords. Walter treats it with the same sort of profundity as he does the symphonies, and it responds magnificently. He gives a very high-powered performance (as he does of the symphonies, in the Philips set), strong but never harsh in tone, firm in architecture, steady in pulse. There is no "yielding", and little evident "grace"; but so convincing is the result that, as with Toscanini's Brahms readings, we can accept the interpretation whole-heartedly.

Part of the pleasure of this work lies in the miraculously well calculated orchestral texture, never drowning the solo instruments, yet never pandering to them, but making them part of the musical argument. The balance on this record is most beautifully maintained. Listen to the opening of the Andante, where at each alternate bar the soloists break from their union with the orchestra. (And how much this magical theme gains from the strong handling Walter accords it: a shade more tenderness, and we should weary of it long before the end of the movement was reached.)

Walter draws very fine playing from the New York Orchestra; and his soloists are a splendid pair. Stern needs no recommendation: an occasional touch of steel in his rounded, full tone accords with the general reading. Leonard Rose, leader of the Philharmonic-Symphony 'cellos until he became a soloist only, is his peer. Especially

beautiful is his phrasing of the long, lyrical utterance starting at bar 156 of the first movement. In all the many passages where one instrument takes over from another in mid-phrase, the joins are completely smooth—without the score, it is often hard to spot them. The soloists are equally successful at borrowing one another's voices and, when the music requires it, at contrasting their tones as much as possible.

The Finale is a beautiful movement, yet its main theme, purely as a theme, must surely be reckoned dull. It is a measure of Walter's success that he finds the ideal speed for *vivace non troppo*, and delivers the theme in such a way that it will stand the weight of the movement built on it. The recording is clear, strong and forward, and made at a much higher level than many of Philips's earlier issues. For best results, the bass should be strengthened a little.

The two Overtures, which make this 12-inch LP unusually good value for money, are both fine performances—the best available, I think. The *Academic Festival* is recorded at a slightly lower level than the Concerto, and needs a "brighter" setting. The recording of the *Tragic* is very vivid. Again, splendid orchestral playing and decisive, firmly modelled interpretations. A.P.

**FRANCK. Psyché—Symphonic Poem. Netherlands Chamber Choir, Hague Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by Willem van Otterloo. Philips ABL3114 (12 in., 38s. 3d.).

Concertgebouw, Beinum (11/53) LXT2829-30 or (1/54) LW5069  
Belgian Radio S.O., Andre (6/54) LGX60024 or (8/54) LGX60028

What the gramophone companies have hitherto issued as *Psyché* is less than half the complete work, and in the light of this, the sleeve-notes' reference to an "omitted choral part" is perhaps a little inadequate. The complete *Psyché*, as the new Philips disc shows us, consists of three parts:

I—"Psyche asleep"; II—(i) "Psyche borne by the zephyrs", (ii) "Cupid's garden", and (iii) "Psyche and Cupid"; III—"Punishment: Psyche's sufferings and griefs", and then "Apotheosis". The Decca and Telefunken versions ended with "Psyche and Cupid", and readers of the Decca sleeve-note may perhaps have asked themselves where was the depiction of Psyche wandering round the garden disconsolately, where the final "ecstasy of triumph"? We discover the answer by hearing for the first time Part III, which is almost as long as all the rest put together.

But already in "Cupid's Garden" this new version departs from the earlier ones, for we hear voices praising "Love, the source of Life", telling Psyche of her invisible lover, and singing of the charm and beauty of marriage. It has been patly remarked that the voices do not add anything to the effect of the music; but they do—much more so than in *Daphnis and Chloé*. The Netherlands Chamber Choir sings most beautifully, with lovely tone, and enunciation so clear that even if the sleeve-note (which I have not seen) should omit to print the words, they will be quite largely intelligible to anyone who follows

French. Towards the end of this section the sopranos in long chords warn Psyche about the dangers of curiosity.

Part III takes the whole of the third side. Again the chorus begins it, announcing that Psyche's punishment is about to commence. This is a tragedy depicted with great sweetness. A new theme denotes Cupid's forgiveness, the voices return, there are reminiscences of earlier passages, and the Franciscan sequences pile higher and higher for the Apotheosis. If you like César Franck's music, then you will want *Psyché* complete, though personally I found that she tended to overstay her welcome, and I would be content, really, to leave her in Cupid's arms. Willem van Otterloo's conducting of the work is perhaps a little less sensitive than that of Van Beinum; nevertheless he gives a delicate, imaginative performance, well played for the most part. The recording of Parts I and II is even better than on the Decca disc. Part III is spoiled by a slight subterranean rumble, as if an Underground train were circling round and round underneath the studio. A.P.

**HINDEMITH. Nobilissima Visione—Orchestral Suite. Symphonic Metamorphoses on a Theme by Weber. Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by Joseph Keilberth. Telefunken LGX66055 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

*Nobilissima Visione:*  
Philharmonia, Klempner (12/55) 33CX1241  
*Symphonic Metamorphoses:*  
Chicago S.O., Kubelik (9/55) (H)ALP1251

A study of the alternatives here brings up the whole question of appropriate backings, a big consideration from the buyer's point of view. To anyone genuinely interested in Hindemith, or in near-contemporary music in general, the present disc will be warmly welcome, for it couples together two contrasting works by a master whose sanity of outlook, impatience with dogmas, and preoccupation with phrase-shape and with sheer sound make him a rare figure in the present-day scene. The earlier work the suite from the ballet about St. Francis of Assisi, represents Hindemith at his most expressive (and impressive); the latter, for all its ponderous title, is the composer at his breeziest. But does Telefunken stand the risk therefore that non-Hindemithians may pass the disc by (which would be a poor return for their intelligent choice and the obvious care they have taken in the recording)? Such would appear to be the thinking of Columbia by their backing *Nobilissima Visione* with the Haydn-Brahms variations as a bait. This presupposes that (a) record buyers won't already have a Haydn-Brahms, and (b) if they want one they'll go for this and not an all-Brahms disc. So what should A (being the gramophone company) do? Go openly for the informed listeners, or lure on the others with a popular classic? Readers' reactions would be interesting to know. (And, incidentally, in H.M.V.'s Weber-Hindemith backed by the Schönberg *Five Pieces*, which work is the come-on for which?)

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| 6. Fantasia : In nomine            | 13. The Cries of London       |
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| 2. Though you are young        | 7. Turn back, you wanton flyer      |
| 3. I care not for these ladies | 8. It fell in a summer's day        |
| 4. Follow thy fair sun         | 9. The Cypress curtain of the night |
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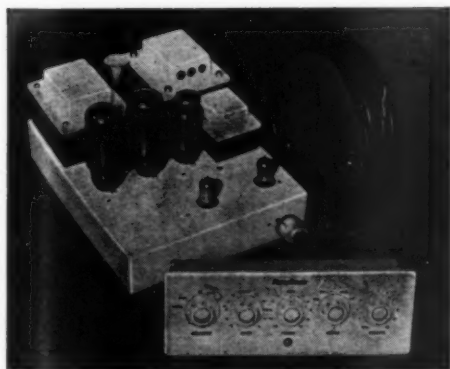
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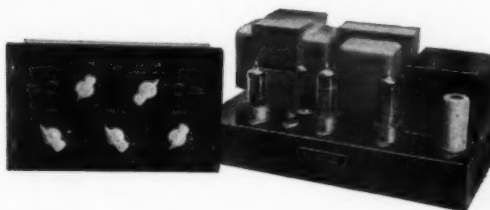
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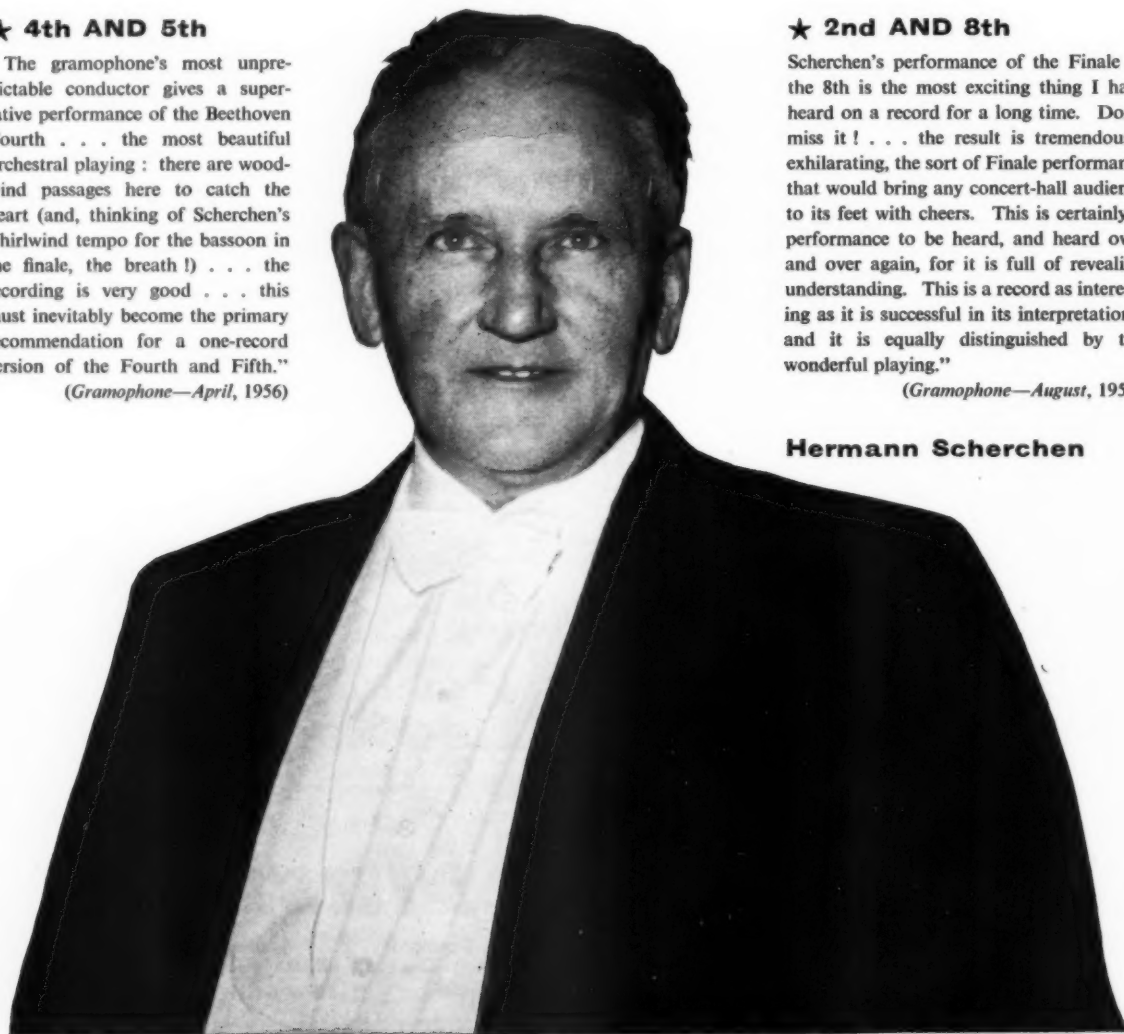
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(*Gramophone*—April, 1956)



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(*Gramophone*—August, 1955)

**Hermann Scherchen**



Columbia. Both are eloquent performances, faithfully recorded, with Hindemith's great brass chords blazing through splendidly. The Hamburg strings are perhaps better caught by the microphone—which incidentally reveals a momentary roughness of theirs in the fugato of the second movement. When it comes to the Weber *Metamorphoses*, moreover, the competition is as keen: though both Telefunken and H.M.V. ride the enormous climaxes of sound comfortably, the latter produces a more ample, opulent sound. This is particularly so in the *Turandot* movement and the challenging opening fanfares of the finale. In the *Turandot* scherzo I don't much care for the horn tone in the fugal entries, and the out-of-tune tubular bells definitely jar; but the big difference between the two recordings concerns the speed of the first movement. Kubelik makes of it a restrained, rather ponderous, *Allegro*: Keilberth takes it at a tremendous lick, and gets by only by his brass performing prodigies of articulation. To hear one after the other makes one realise how imprecise is our present musical notation. There is a lot of pleasure to be had from this new issue; but it *does* depend, as I was saying, on what you want with it. P.B.

**JANACEK. Sinfonietta. Taras Bulba—Rhapsody for Orchestra. Pro Musica Symphony, Vienna, conducted by Jascha Horenstein. Vox PL9710 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

*Sinfonietta*:  
Czech P.O., Bakala (11/53) LPM21  
V.P.O., Kubelik (2/56) LW5213  
*Taras Bulba*:  
V.S.O., Swoboda (8/54) WLP5071

To listen to Janacek is to form a more favourable impression of Taras Bulba than to read Gogol. For the printed word conveys a picture of a seventeenth century Cossack colonel, firebrand, murderer, misogynist, anti-semitic, fantastic nationalist with a blinding hatred of everybody and everything non-Russian; not at all the sort of man to have round to dinner. But the recorded sound allows heroism, strength, and determination to be added to the picture; even, in the first movement, a trace of affection for one of his sons—affection presumably terminated when Bulba shoots him down in cold blood.

Janacek's colourful score is handled well by the Pro Musica Symphony, and recorded well by Vox; on all counts this new version is distinctly to be preferred to its earlier competitor, not at all, now, a strong one. In any event that Nixa disc is on the verge of deletion; but before it is too late it may be worth drawing the attention of Janacek specialists to its backing—the only available recording of the composer's Suite for String Orchestra, an early work, agreeable if quite uncharacteristic.

The new version of the Sinfonietta is also a successful one, though with some reservation of a minor degree. For Horenstein takes a somewhat restrained view of the music, giving a performance that is satisfactory enough musically, but which lacks a sense of urgency. And the rather repetitive nature of much of Janacek's music, as far as its bar to bar construction is concerned,

does demand an unflagging impulse to see it through.

This impulse is much more readily produced by Kubelik; who on his Decca medium-play version of the Sinfonietta, with the Vienna Philharmonic, is in any case quite stunningly recorded. The Supraphon version is not at present available, but A.P. declared it, reviewing the Decca last February, to be no serious competitor, giving entirely convincing reasons.

Considering only the Sinfonietta, I would recommend the Decca. Considering *Taras Bulba*, the new Vox, and this of course will automatically produce on the back a very adequate Sinfonietta. The convenience of the coupling, in fact, is incomplete in only one respect: no scrolls to separate the movements of either work—and *Taras Bulba*, though entitled a Rhapsody, has in fact three distinct movements no less than the Sinfonietta has five. M.M.

**LISZT. Mephisto Waltz, No. 1. Mazeppa—Symphonic Poem No. 6. Hamlet—Symphonic Poem No. 10. Prometheus—Symphonic Poem No. 5. Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Karl Münchinger. Decca LXT5142 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

On all counts *Hamlet* is the prince on this occasion; it is among the best of the Liszt symphonic poems, it is new to the LP repertory, and it probably gets, marginally, the best performance and recording. The choice of subject, of course, made it impossible for Liszt to solve his problem merely by writing claptrap to the required length; he must needs produce poetry to match the occasion, whether it be the ruminative opening section, the tranquil Ophelia episode, or the final funeral march. And Münchinger persuades the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra into poetry to match the occasion, too.

A robust string tone is produced, also, throughout the record. This goes a great deal of the way towards making *Mazeppa*, one of the rowdier symphonic poems, acceptable; but actually a more blatant attack on the piece might have been more in the context. Tied naked to his wild horse, and set loose to gallop over the steppes, *Mazeppa* probably had little time for the niceties.

Nor, I expect, had *Prometheus* on his rock; but the virtues of this performance, and of that of the first *Mephisto Waltz*, we have had a previous opportunity to get to know—the two pieces were coupled on an MP disc, Decca LW5136, which I reviewed with enthusiasm in our issue of December, 1954. In the new form they are equally good, unless it could be that the recorded sound of *Prometheus* tails off slightly towards the centre of the disc.

*Hamlet* will make this record indispensable to the Liszt enthusiast, the other pieces will make it attractive (except to an enthusiast who already has the MP version of *Prometheus* and the *Mephisto Waltz*—he may hold different views on the attraction

of the present format). It is a most useful addition to the catalogues, which—in these days of mammoth editions—rather noticeably lack an organised set of the twelve Liszt symphonic poems. But then perhaps it's only historically appropriate that the Liszt discography is set fair to get in a worse mess than the listing of the music itself! M.M.

**LISZT. Hungarian Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra.**

**TCHAIKOVSKY. Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 23. Julius Katchen (piano), London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierino Gamba. Decca LXT5164 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

*Hungarian Fantasia*:  
Antal, Prague R.O., Sejna (10/53) LPM19  
*Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor*:  
Curzon, New S.O., Szell (1/51) LXT2550  
Solomon, Philharmonia, Dobrowen (10/52) (H)CLP1001  
Bruchollerie, Vienna Philharmonia, Moralt (7/53) PL7720  
Anda, Philharmonia, Galliera (11/54) 39CX1156  
Farnadi, Vienna Op., Scherchen (2/55) WLP5309  
Uninsky, Hague P.O., Otterloo (3/55) ABR4020  
Cherkassky, Berlin P.O., Ludwig (5/55) DGM18013  
Bachauer, New London Orch., Sherman (9/55) (H)CLP1049  
Badura-Skoda, Phil. Prom. Orch., Boult (7/56) NCL16013

Decca's sleeve-notes have hitherto been dignified and informative, but here we have a sad departure from their previous practice. Instead of telling us about the music—when it was written, for example—we have printed on the sleeve a review of the record couched in terms which must surely make the artists concerned in it blush, and which is not even accurate. "Gamba enunciates the famous opening bars with dramatic force perfectly controlled . . . and Katchen's entry is as firm as granite yet quivering with life". About the performance of the *Hungarian Fantasia*, we are blandly informed that "Katchen and Gamba adopt the right course in this music". Come now, Decca! Your products are good enough not to call for this sort of presentation! Advertise as enthusiastically as you like, but let the listener make up his own mind once he has decided to buy your disc.

As a matter of fact, the performance of the Tchaikovsky is a sad disappointment: the fault partly of the pianist (at times brilliant, but often quite dull and heavy), largely of the conductor and largely, too, of the recording. The cover of this record shrilly proclaims:

"a degree of perfection—startlingly realistic—never before achieved by recorded sound"

and is decorated with what appears to be an enlarged photograph of a spectral tadpole swimming across a stave of music. This is "a cathode ray oscilloscope representation of top C of a grand pianoforte played staccato"; and a cathode ray oscilloscope, we learn from a note on the back, is "included in the vast array of highly scientific apparatus used by the recording engineer in the course of his work". Its function is "to enable the engineer to compare the faithfulness of his recording to the original sound". The poor critic,

alas, has only a pair of ears to tell him whether the sound coming from the disc faithfully resembles the sound he knows so well from the concert hall; and my pair of ears tells me that Decca have produced far more life-like representations of piano and orchestra than this one is. But impressed by the billing on the sleeve, I called in several other musicians (not engineers) to get expert opinions. I fear we were unanimous in our refusal to be impressed by the cathode ray, unanimous too in preferring the sound of the Deutsche Grammophon recording of the Concerto!

The bass is generally heavy and dead in sound, especially in such passages as the off-beat pizzicato notes which accompany the *tranquillo* section after the second subject (I, bars 206ff). An easily found check-point is the thump which opens side 2, the third movement. The second subject itself, when it comes out on the piano (I, 194) is clanky, and the cadenza sounds like quite an old-fashioned sort of piano recording. Disconcertingly, the piano seems to be at different distances in various passages, and the balance, both between soloist and orchestra and within the orchestra itself, is never quite easy.

Gamba may be partly responsible for the fact that piano/orchestra dialogues such as at bars 53ff never sound like dialogues, but like monologues with a discreet murmur in the background; or that the lyrical exchanges between solo 'cellos and piano, then solo oboe, 'cellos and piano, in the Andantino, are never properly fused into one piece of music-making.

Katchen's contribution may be described as *solid*—where Cherkassky's is compound of fire and air. The younger Russian-American pianist has a nasty trick, in the opening section, of snatching at the ends of phrases. The passage of swelling, alternating octaves (bars 162ff) is accountably prosaic in this performance. The anonymous note-writer informs us that in the prestissimo of the second movement, "like a scherzo of fireflies on a hot summer night, Katchen makes the little clusters of notes dart and splash with iridescent colouring". Which is just what he does not do, to start with, though later in this section his playing becomes truly brilliant. There is not much rhythmic vitality about his delivery of the main theme of the finale, and one cannot hear the grace notes clearly.

I have ungenerously picked out for mention above the least successful passages, because these illustrate most clearly the sort of qualities that make the performance so little enjoyable. It has the virtues of freedom from vulgarity, never a trace of flashiness, and uniformity of conception—all too much so. It is never showy—and, on the whole, dull. In short, the Deutsche Grammophon recording with Cherkassky, the Berlin Philharmonic and Ludwig remains my first choice—in fact the only one of the many performances now available that I can still listen to with pleasure.

For good measure—better measure than any except the Westminster disc offers—Decca throw in Liszt's Hungarian Fantasia, in its first domestic LP recording. Now this is a much more vivid sort of performance,

and more vividly recorded too, even if here and there the piano tone is a little unreal. Gamba holds the Magyar rhythms with remarkable skill, and Katchen gives a really wonderful display of virtuosity, especially in the repeated notes of what the sleeve-writer calls the "dinging piece of pianism" that enshrines the final theme. This would make an enjoyable MP side. A.P.

**MENDELSSOHN. Concerto No. 1 in G minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 25. Concerto No. 2 in D minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 40. Peter Katin (piano), London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. Decca LXT5201 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

*Concerto No. 1:*  
Gilels, A.U.R.S.O., Kondrashin (3/55) MWL308  
*Concerto No. 2:*  
Balsam, S.O., Gimpel (8/52) PLP229

A two-star record. The Mendelssohn G minor Concerto is no favourite of mine, but Peter Katin does all that can be done for it, turning the first movement with a blend of bravura and delicacy, bringing great concentration to the Andante (and it is a feat to play this as if it meant something!) and delivering the ghastly tune of the Finale with conviction. One even ends up by conceding a kind of reluctant admiration for the work. But small wonder that it has lost its grip on the modern concert repertory.

Emil Gilels gives a grander sort of performance, with more strongly characterised playing; but the Russian recording cannot begin to compare with this new version.

The D minor is a much more enjoyable work, superior especially in the first movement. By playing it with poetry and imagination, Mr. Katin avoids the sugar-icing effect of so many of the pages. His phrasing of the Adagio is immensely distinguished. The Finale is one of those *moto perpetuo* movements which need never stop, so fluent and facile is its flow; but here and there the composer surprises us with a passage quite strikingly pretty.

The soloist's polished, shapely playing is finely supported by the orchestra; his tone is always beautiful, and the recording is first-rate. A.P.

**MOZART. Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 17 in G major, K.453. Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 26 in D major, K.537. Ingrid Haebler (piano), Bamberg Symphony, Pro Musica Symphony conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. Vox PL9390 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

*Concerto No. 17:*  
Matthews, London Mozart, Blech (5/56) 3SSX1044  
Henkemans, Pritchard, V.S.O. ABL3115  
*Concerto No. 26:*  
Kraus, V.S.O., Moralt (8/53) PL7300  
Demus, Vienna Op., Horvath (11/54) WLP5183  
Bachauer, New London Orch., Sherman (11/54) (H)DLP1006  
Casadesus, Orch., Szell (8/55) ABL3060  
Seemann, Berlin P.O., Lehmann (10/55) DGM18143  
Gulda, New S.O., Collins (8/56) LXT5138

Let us hope that Miss Haebler does not turn out to be a one-disc woman. This, her third record, is in the class of her

disappointing second, not her successful first. The move to Bamberg (from Vienna) has been attended by no improvement in the recording: rather the reverse—the piano tone here has a strange, prim quality. Listen to the *Larghetto* of the "Coronation" Concerto to hear the sound in all its nakedness. Something very funny seems to be happening: the piano sounds ill-regulated, and can it be external sympathetic resonances that produce the blurry effect?

Listen, too, to the prosaic way in which Miss Haebler phrases this movement, dead-pan, in the sort of way one might play it if wanting to demonstrate what a poor movement it is!

In the first movement of K.453 the playing sometimes suggests a row of little sparrows, busily pecking up a row of crumbs. Denis Matthews in this movement (the only rival version) at least plays *lines*, even if his handling is not very decisive. I should choose the Columbia, if I had to buy a recording of the concerto at once. Both performances are musical, and could give a certain amount of pleasure but neither is outstanding. Miss Haebler's most imaginative moment is the passage of chromatic syncopation in the finale (bars 95ff).

In the "Coronation" Concerto she goes bouncing along over the top line, as if a flute, not a piano, concerto were in question. Again, there is no outstanding alternative, though the Deutsche Grammophon disc is probably the most recommendable: Carl Seeman does at least take charge of the music at his entry. The orchestral accompaniment in the new Vox is unrefined but sturdy. A.P.

**RAVEL. Ma mère Poye. Rapsodie Espagnole; Une barque sur l'océan —No. 3 from "Miroirs". Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by D. E. Inghelbrecht. London Ducretet-Thomson DTL93087 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

*Ma mère Poye:*  
Suisse, Ansermet (1/52) LXT2632  
Boston S.O., Koussevitzky (11/52) (H)ALP1003  
*Rapsodie Espagnole:*  
Suisse, Ansermet (6/52) LXT2637  
Philadelphia, Ormandy (11/53) 33C1023  
Philharmonia, Karajan (2/54) 33CX1099  
French Rad. S., Leibowitz (6/54) PL8150  
Boston S.O., Munch (6/55) (H)ALP1245

These are quite good performances. If you want just these works gathered on one disc, then you may be content with the reasonably good, though not outstanding, way they are played. But they are not always particularly sensitive in their playing, nor does the conductor seem to be one who greatly cares about drawing lovely sounds from his orchestra—as Karajan does, for example, in his record of the *Rapsodie Espagnole*.

Of the records of the *Mother Goose Suite*, both Ansermet's and Inghelbrecht's begin with the *Prelude* and *Spinning-wheel Dance*, which Koussevitzky's does not. (This was added by Ravel for performance as a ballet.) All the same, and especially since this added piece is not remarkably attractive, I myself would choose Koussevitzky's performance for its lovely and characterful



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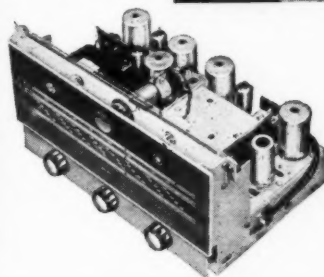
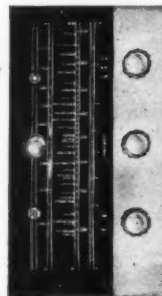
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playing (compare the clarinet in *Beauty and the Beast* with either of the others) and for its recording which is not afraid to give us real softness. But then, on second thoughts, I would have to be feeling rich to choose it, for its backing is the *Bohème*, and even if I were enamoured of the piece there have been much better recordings of it since 1952. The same is true of the recording of Debussy's *La Mer* which backs the Ansermet performance.

So we return to Inghelbrecht and his backing. But if I wanted the *Rapsodie Espagnole* I should go for Karajan. You have only to listen to the first piece, *Prélude à la nuit*, to hear the imaginative sound that Karajan evokes and which Inghelbrecht does not even seem to think about.

Oh, dear! Am I merely being confusing? At least I hope I have indicated what I think the best of each work is. But I think I have not suggested enough that much of the playing on this new disc is good and that I did get considerable enjoyment from it. And I ought to have mentioned the orchestrated piece from *Miroirs* which is well-played and sounds very much better than the earlier record of it, included in a disc by Poulet and the L.S.O., which had a rather poor recorded sound. The whole of this new disc is well recorded in the typically bright Ducretet-Thomson way.

Not great performances, in fact, but ones of considerable merit and making a useful coupling. T.H.

#### RAVEL. *Tzigane*.

SCHUBERT. *Rondo in A major for Violin and Orchestra*. Erich Röhn (violin), Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Walter Martin. Telefunken TM68052 (10 in., 19s. 6d.).

*Tzigane*: Ferras, Belgian Nat., Sebastian (11/53) LXT2827

This is a most attractive medium-play disc. The Schubert *Rondo* is not quite the type that might have done for a concerto's finale, had Schubert had a mind to write one; it is instead almost a miniature concerto in itself, covering a rather wider range of style and mood than a normal classical finale. Its orchestral performance here (the accompaniment may have been originally intended for string quartet) is first-class; the Hamburg Philharmonic strings are on their toes throughout. Erich Röhn, however, is a little less happy: sensitive enough, he turns his phrases here and there slightly too raggedly to be entirely winning in the classics.

In the Ravel, however, he comes into his own; this is entirely winning. The piece demands not clarity but abandon, and Röhn shows that he has that, and to spare. As well as the general idea Ravel, of course, borrowed from gipsy music many technical devices. In particular, the domination of the violinist-leader, who must here take the strain of a lengthy opening cadenza—not the string soloist's favourite place (witness most concert-hall performances of the Brahms Double Concerto); but Röhn plunges in, and the Hungarian plains open up before us. Nor do they recede even when the symphony orchestra makes its entry;

for many touches of scoring make allusion to the *Tzigane* orchestra. Antal Koczé himself would surely enjoy this record very much indeed. M.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY. *Serenade for Strings*, Op. 48. *Orchestre Symphonique de la Radiodiffusion Nationale Belge* conducted by Franz André. Telefunken LGM65036 (10 in., 29s. 6d.).

Philharmonia, Kletzki (7/54) 33CX1164  
Pittsburgh S.O., Steinberg (8/55) CTL7084

This is noticeably well recorded: the string tone is full, rich and clean. And the playing is workmanlike, and without mishap. But it is only seldom ravishing; while the more vigorous passages come off well, the less vigorous on the whole do not. A refusal to play *pianissimo* may have recording advantages, but it does make it difficult for the conductor to secure an air of mystery when that is appropriate. The passage opening the *Elegy* may be cited: this is certainly played with fine tone, and also with equally fine muted tone when it reappears later—but on neither occasion is it shaped well enough for the music's full effect. Again, the introduction to the first movement: if only the strings could have been persuaded at its end to drop to a quarter of their volume, how much more effective their fine playing of the opening of the *allegro* would have been!

Good though the recording is, full occupation of both sides of a ten-inch LP does in any event now seem a cumbersome and expensive format for the *Serenade*. Both competing versions occupy only one side of a twelve-inch disc; and both are extremely well played, with the recording of the Capitol just on comparable with that of the new Telefunken, and that of the Columbia not far behind. Couplings must therefore come into it: on the Columbia Kletzki offers good versions of the Ravel *Bohème* and Smetana *Bartered Bride* overture, on the Capitol Steinberg offers a hurried version of the Prokofiev *Classical Symphony*. M.M.

## CHAMBER MUSIC

BACH. *Brandenburg Concertos*, Nos. 1-6 Complete, BWV 1046-1051. Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. Decca LXT5198-99 (two 12 in., 79s. 3d.).

Complete:  
Stuttgart Chamber Orch., Münchinger.  
(1/51) LXT2540, (1/51) LX3029, (9/50) LXT2501  
London Baroque Ensemble, Haas.  
(12/53) WLP6309-1/3  
Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Wenzinger.  
(4/55) APM14011-2, AP13016  
Ensemble, Horenstein. (12/55) DL122-1/2

This turns out to be the mixture as before, except that, perhaps stung by Vox's example, Decca have got all six concertos onto two discs instead of three. These are elderly recordings judged by modern standards, but they still fall very pleasantly on the ear with their stylish playing and surprisingly good quality. Their only serious available rivals are the three D.G.G. discs by Wenzinger and the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, but these of course cost more. R.F.

BACH. *Concerto for Two Harpsichords and Orchestra in C minor*, BWV 1060. *Concerto for Two Harpsichords and Orchestra in C major*, BWV1061. *Concerto for Violin, Oboe and Orchestra in D minor*. Helma Elsner (harpsichord), Rolf Reinhardt (harpsichord), Will Beh (violin), Friedrich Milde (oboe), Pro Musica String Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. Vox PL9580 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

Two Harpsichord Concertos:  
Appleton, Field, Castle Hill F.O., Brief  
Pianos (11/55) NCL16007  
Salter, Spinks, London Baroque, Haas  
Harpsichords (3/54) PMA1009  
*Concerto for Violin, Oboe and Orchestra*:  
Ales, Pierlot, O.L. Ensemble, Froment  
(2/56) OL50074  
Feliciani, Shann, Basle Chamber, Sacher  
(2/56) NBR6028

This disc consists of Bach's only surviving concerto originally written for two harpsichords, the one in C major, and, on the other side, the C minor concerto for the same forces together with an attempt at a reconstruction of its alleged original for violin and oboe; in other words on this side you get the same music twice over, once in C minor and once in D minor with different solo instruments, and I don't think there can be much doubt that the work sounds more convincing for violin and oboe. At any rate this record gives you a wonderful chance to decide for yourself which is the more satisfactory version.

As regards performance, the two harpsichordists are extremely good. They play with commendably few changes of registration on what I take to be Neupert instruments, and very full and resonant the sound. The string accompaniment is much less satisfying. At the start of the C major it is not in tune with the keyboards, and sometimes behind the beat. All through it is much too prominent. These are not concertos in the modern sense; there is no question of the band rivalling the soloist in holding our attention; indeed these concertos sound quite satisfactory without an orchestra at all. They are "accompanied" concertos in the sense that Haydn's violin sonatas and piano trios are "accompanied"—keyboard solos but a string player or two can join in if available. Thus in these Bach works the band should be very small, smaller perhaps than on this disc (Bach quite likely just had a string quartet in mind), and kept well in the background. The balance is better in the concerto for violin and oboe. The pizzicato accompaniment in the slow movement does not ping in the eardrums as it does in the harpsichord version, and incidentally it is interesting that the violin and oboe soloists should wish to play this movement so very much slower than the two harpsichordists. But the trouble here is the oboe tone, which in the middle register sounds like a saxophone. Also there should surely be a harpsichord continuo. There is one in Paul Sacher's excellent disc of this music which is, to my mind, quite the best of the three available. But the intelligent coupling on the new Vox and the fine keyboard playing should attract plenty of customers. R.F.

**BENJAMIN. Sonatina for Violin and Piano (a).****VAUGHAN WILLIAMS. Sonata in A minor for Violin and Piano (b).**

(a) **Frederick Grinke** (violin), **Arthur Benjamin** (piano); (b) **Frederick Grinke** (violin), **Michael Mulliner** (piano). Decca LXT5143 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

I thoroughly enjoyed this record of music which had not previously come my way. The Benjamin Sonatina dates from 1924 and it is surprising that it should be played so seldom. The Vaughan Williams sonata is one of his most recent works, written in his usual youthful, energetic style at the age of eighty-two. The Benjamin is more tuneful and perhaps better written for the instruments. It starts with an almost Fauré-like melody that is to return at the end of the work, has a neat, nimble scherzo of great charm in the middle, and a finale based on a tune you can hum before the music has finished. The Vaughan Williams is a work of granite. It is continually suggesting contrapuntal intricacies that are not in fact there when one comes to consult the music (and none the worse for that, of course). Thus the violin starts with a swinging theme that seems to be an augmented version of the accompaniment theme, but isn't quite. Passages which the ear takes to be canonic are no more than nearly canonic. The second movement, a scherzo, has energy in super-abundance; it is perhaps the best movement of the three. The finale consists of a well-varied set of variations on a rather stark theme; as in the Benjamin, the first tune of the work returns at the end.

Grinke brings to all this music splendid technique and impeccable musicianship. He is a most reliable violinist to whom it is always a pleasure to listen. In the Benjamin, the composer plays the piano part; in the Vaughan Williams the pianist is Michael Mulliner. Both seem to me excellent, except that they do not always carry out the composers' dynamic marks. The Benjamin Sonatina, according to the score, should start *pp*, but it doesn't on this disc, and the piano is much too loud in trio section of the scherzo, in which the violin is muted. Similarly in the Vaughan Williams the contrasts between *p* and *f*, or *pp* and *ff*, are simply not there. For some years now Vaughan Williams has gone in for what in eighteenth century music are called "terraced dynamics"; that is, the music is laid out in sections alternately loud and soft, with scarcely any crescendos or diminuendos, and no *mf*'s at all, and presumably he wants the music to sound that way. Actually he often puts so many notes into the piano part that Michael Mulliner has no hope of producing a *pianissimo* effect; the faults, such as they are, cannot all be laid at his door. Perhaps the apparent over-use of the soft pedal (and the resultant somewhat blanket quality of the piano) is due to his desire to reduce tone. Perhaps, too, the heavy piano writing led to the violinist being placed just a shade too near the microphone in the Vaughan Williams. But these are not obtrusive faults in a fine disc. I should add that both works, especially the Vaughan Williams,

are of formidable difficulty and that the problems that have been triumphantly surmounted are of far more importance than those mentioned above where perfection has not quite been achieved. I would strongly recommend this record. R.F.

**BRAHMS. Trio No. 2 in C major, Op. 87.****HAYDN. Trio No. 1 in G major, Op. 73, No. 2, "Gipsy Trio". Trio di Trieste. Decca LXT5204 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Haydn Trio No. 1: Badura-Skoda, etc. (8/55) WLP5202

My surprise at finding that this is the first LP version of the Brahms C major piano trio to be issued in this country drove me to the record catalogues, where I found that the companion trio in C minor, Op. 100, has not yet been issued here, nor have the splendid A major and C minor piano quartets. Americans can buy the piano quartets in several versions, notably the A major played by Curzon and members of the Budapest Quartet and the C minor by Szigeti, Katims, Tortelier and Myra Hess, and it is surely about time that people over here had an opportunity of buying these attractive-sounding discs too.

Meanwhile we should be thankful for what is available, and many, I think, will be thankful for this disc of Brahms and Haydn from the Trio di Trieste. The performance of the Brahms is superlatively good, unusually well-balanced, and recorded with wonderful realism. All three players have excellent technique, which allows them to take the ghostly scherzo rather faster than is usual in this country, and it needs all the speed it can be given. In all four movements they seem well inside the music. I would not however say this so confidently of their Haydn. The famous Gypsy Rondo is wonderfully nimble, but the allegedly gypsy convention of playing the *piano* phrases (the ones that alternate with *ff* phrases) very slowly has surely nothing at all to do with Haydn and his times, and should not have encroached on to this disc. In the slow movement the 'cellist can stand Haydn's total indifference to his talents no longer, and he takes over the repeat of the second subject from the violin, and, when later this tune returns, joins in with it an octave below the violin. Many people are sorry that the strings accompany the piano in Haydn's trios instead of being equal partners as in Mozart's and Beethoven's, but it is surely no use trying to "improve" a composer of Haydn's stature. On the rival Nixa recording the players show more respect for him; also they give us all the repeats in the first movement (whereas the Trio di Trieste only make repeats in the theme), and Badura-Skoda and his string players do not stray into the occasional unstylish rubati that momentarily tarnish the playing of this movement on the new disc. But the instrumental quality on the Nixa is well below that on the new Decca, the piano sounding blanketly, while the final rondo, though it has the virtue of strict tempo, lacks the sparkle the Trio di Trieste bring to it. There is not, in sum, very much wrong

with the Haydn, much that is good in it, and the splendid performance of the Brahms should send many people searching their pocket-books for a couple of pounds. R.F.

**DVORAK. Trio in E minor, Op. 90, "Dumky". Hansen Trio. Telefunken LGM65034 (10 in., 29s. 6½d.).**

Dvořák's use of the *dumka*, a Slavonic ballad form, is one of the happiest innovations in his chamber music: but whereas the melancholy-slow, lively-fast formula he develops so successfully in, for example, the E flat String Quartet (Op. 51) and the A major Piano Quintet (Op. 81) was confined to one movement, it was quite another thing to devote the whole course of a piano trio to this formula and present the listener with six successive *dumky*. The composer's skill, however, prevents the work from ever becoming monotonous. The key scheme is carefully planned and, broadly speaking, the music falls into four movements. The first three *dumky* are directed to be played without a break (*attacca subito*), thus forming a first movement, then follow a slow movement in the shape of a March (*andante moderato*) with *scherzando* sections, a Scherzo with some quasi recitative passages, and a final movement similar in form and sentiment to the first one. The particular gem of the work is the third *dumka*, in a Lohengrin-like A major, which is exquisite.

All through, as in the Piano Quintet, the writing for the piano—much of it in the upper register—is remarkably effective and lucid. This brings me to the pianist, Conrad Hansen, who gives his name to the Trio that performs the work and who is an artist of great sensibility. The way he plays the simple single line melody at the start of this A major *dumka* is, to my mind, an object lesson in true musicianship and something from which every budding pianist, and a great many established ones, could learn. But he excels all the way through both in expressive and in brilliant passages and his piano has been given recording of startling fidelity—among the best, I have ever heard.

Erich Röhn and Arthur Troesler are excellent colleagues, though Mr. Röhn's violin tone is a little weak on the top string, and the balance is good.

A scroll has been placed after the second *dumka* which makes the pause (though only a slight one) Dvořák did not want, but on the other hand, does enable one to pick out the A major *dumka* if one feels like playing just this one of the first three, or if one wants to demonstrate to one's friends the particular beauty of the pianist's playing in this number.

I hope this most melodious and very well performed and recorded work will find the large public it deserves. A.R.

**MOZART. Divertimento No. 15 in B flat major, K.287. Members of the Vienna Octet. Decca LXT5112 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Where to begin singing the praises of this most enchanting record I do not know. With Mozart, I suppose: this is one of the more entirely captivating divertimenti, with



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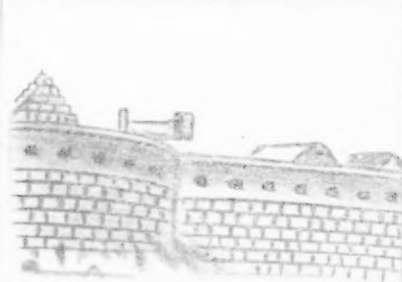
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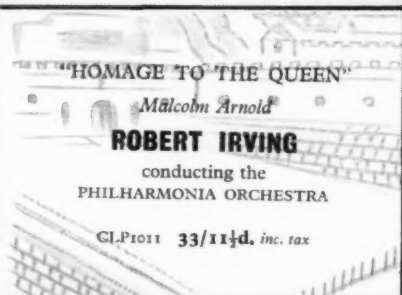
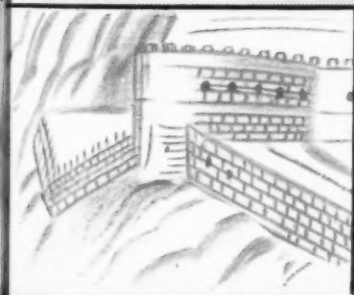
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a leisurely six-movement layout for two horns, two violins, viola, and double-bass. And an emphasis on the divertimento tradition of the soloist-leader by exploiting the first violin very substantially throughout, even to a hair-raising excursion into the tenth position, no less—surely the only one in the whole of Mozart?

Whether in the first or the tenth position, Willi Boskovsky plays exquisitely: leader or accomplice as occasion demands—usually leader. But the flexibly-counted Vienna Octet is nowhere behind in skill or taste, whether it is a matter of marvellously clean horn-playing, muted second violin and viola weaving an exquisite accompaniment in the Adagio, or Johann Krump demonstrating how much better and lighter and more flexible he considers the bass to be than the 'cello as the fourth member of a string quartet. It happens that I heard this record just after writing the review of the Mozart Wind Serenade in an adjoining column, and the opinion I expressed there is now reinforced: with bass-playing of this quality available that wind combination would spring to life.

This present divertimento *does* spring to life; and I hope the picture will be completed by mentioning that the recording is perfect, with the acute balance problems of two horns and four strings completely solved. If there is a much better Mozart record in the catalogues than this, I would like to hear it. M.M.

**MOZART. Serenade No. 10 in B flat major for Thirteen Wind Instruments, K.361. Members of L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Decca LXT5121 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Los Angeles P.O., Steinberg (11/53) CTL7090  
R.I.A.S. Wind Ensemble (3/54) LGX66006  
V.S.O., Wind Group (7/54) PL7470  
Vienna Philharmonic Wind (12/55) WLP5229

A smooth recording is robbed of some fraction of its effect by a slight hum; this is of a degree which can probably be eliminated by any reasonably flexible amplifier, but only at the expense of a somewhat reduced bass response. And a smooth performance is robbed of some fraction of its effect by the mildest of occasional upsets; a momentary uncertainty in the ensemble, or a suspicion of tentativeness in the basset-horns. But many virtues remain: a sensitive principal oboe, so vital to eighteenth century wind music, and a choice of tempos more suitable for wind-playing than the extremes of *adagio* occasionally encountered in this work.

In one respect, however, I can detect no virtue. Mozart's fourth movement is a minuet with two trios, a form that can prove, especially on the repeated performances for which a gramophone record is intended, only too easily to be of wearisome length. So a marginal easing of the situation by means of a moderation in repeat-making is to be welcomed; but Ansermet has a more drastic remedy—he proceeds straight from Trio I to Trio II, omitting even a once-through of the Minuet at that point. This is overdoing it.

This new version agrees with all the

others listed in using a double-bassoon for the "bass" part. Mozart, I believe, called for a string bass, without even adding "or double-bassoon", as an alternative; indeed he would have had small temptation to do so, considering the impossibility in his day of fitting such an instrument with keywork even reasonably adequate for solo-playing. The earliest critical comment on the double-bassoon I can find dates from forty-five years later, when still the instrument was unbearably cumbersome and ineffective. Thus in 1825: "No doubt, Ashley would do every justice to the powers of the instrument, if he could but once make it speak", wrote Busby; and in 1830: "This instrument, which rested on a stand, had a sort of flue affixed to the top of it, similar (with the exception of smoke) to that of a Richmond steam-boat. I am ignorant, however, whether it produced any tone, or whether it was placed in the orchestra to terminate the prospect", wrote Parke. But I argue for performance with a string double-bass not merely on grounds of historical accuracy, but also, and principally, on grounds of musical desirability; a string foundation at once lends bite to and smoothes over ensemble wind tone. In the open air, a double-bassoon might be a practical convenience, though the use of even the modern instrument is seldom exactly that; indoors, or recorded, I do suggest that the string alternative would be greatly preferable.

Perhaps one day we shall have such a recorded version; and with five foreign performances already in our lists one might well be given now by a British ensemble—national tastes in wind-playing differ so strongly. Meanwhile I would recommend the Telefunken disc—a very clear recording of an alert performance by the Berlin R.I.A.S. Ensemble. The new Decca version, however, certainly joins the Nixa of the Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group in being a strong runner-up. M.M.

**VIVALDI. Il Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invenzione, Op. 8. Reinhold Barchet (violin), Pro Musica String Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. Vox DL173-1/3 (three 12 in., £6 14s. 4½d.).**

The Four Seasons:  
Barchet, Stuttgart Chamb., Munchinger (10/51) LXT2600  
Virtuosi di Roma (5/55) (H)ALP1234  
Corigliano, N.Y. S.O., Cantelli ABL3063

The twelve violin concertos of Vivaldi's Op. 8 make another big, wholesale issue of baroque music; and once again, though we applaud Vox's enterprise and courage, there has to be a reservation about the issue itself. Let us, however, take the pros first. Accompanying the discs is an excellent booklet by Joseph Braunstein giving a very full account of Vivaldi's life, his work at the Ospedale della Pietà, and his style, with discussions of the concerto form and programme music, and with detailed analyses of the concertos—of which, though all were published in 1725, many were written earlier. Barchet has previously recorded the first four concertos (which, the most musically interesting of the lot, form *The Four Seasons*), but is better here both in tone

and in intonation; and with the exception of a single passage in No. 4 he handles every difficulty (and there are many) without effort, so that the string playing, both in the solo and the tutti, is very assured. The recording is exceptionally clear and well balanced, and in this set the harpsichord continuo is for the most part heard at about the right strength (though better in, for example, No. 3 than in Nos. 6 and 7). It would not be true to say that all twelve concertos are of equal interest—there is too much prolonged gesturing in places; but some of them contain remarkable music—the descriptive *Four Seasons* (full of original and effective ideas), the highly developed No. 11, the energetic No. 12 (possibly intended as an oboe concerto, like No. 9), the lovely *Largo* of No. 8, among other examples.

Then what is the reservation? Apart from minor faults—a viola "domino" in bar 53 of No. 4, an occasional rather sluggish bass when accompanying the soloist's semi-quavers, some debatable harpsichord filling-in in the slow movements of Nos. 3 and 5—there is one fundamental weakness which strikes at the success of the whole undertaking. A casual visitor who heard me playing through part of these six sides said, "It's conscientious playing, but rather dull, isn't it?" My visitor was right enough, but *why* is it dull? Simply because Mr. Barchet concentrates entirely on playing the written notes with rigid accuracy, and Miss Elsner contents herself (save on two occasions when she does take her courage in her hands) with *chang-chang* chords which add nothing of musical interest. I won't bore readers with the whole business all over again, but will just say that in baroque music the notes need to be interpreted according to the current practices of bowing, accentuation, phrasing, ornamentation, and so on, and that harpsichord parts were supposed to be *creative*. A good continuo player would "imitate the solo part so skilfully with his right or left hand, or unexpectedly bring in a counter-melody, that his listeners would swear it had been carefully composed". . . . Wait a minute. I find that D.S. wrote exactly the same thing about the same players in February of last year. Oh well, if we all go on saying it long enough. . . . L.S.

## INSTRUMENTAL

**CHOPIN. Scherzo in B minor. Mazurka in B minor, Op. 33, No. 4. Mazurka in A minor, Op. 17, No. 4. Ballade in A flat, Op. 47. Impromptu in A flat, Op. 29. Nocturne in G major, Op. 37, No. 2. Polonaise in A flat, Op. 53. Niedzielski (piano). London International TW91147 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Doubtless there are people who like their Chopin played as Niedzielski plays it, but I am not one of them. He is best when, as in the scherzo, the music is quick and he feels that something like a strict tempo is called for. Elsewhere his rhythm is capricious in the extreme. Much of the B minor mazurka

is infuriatingly played in what sounds like five-four time. The second theme of the nocturne is unendurably slow and spineless, and the same can be said of the second theme of the impromptu. The music has no basic pulse to carry it along. Niedecki starts the polonaise with something approaching the grandeur this piece requires, and then, when he reaches the main tune (to which, after all, the first page is leading up) he lowers the temperature and tosses it off almost nonchalantly. I found his playing unmusical and irritating. Perhaps one of the technicians felt as I do about it for two pages of the Ballade seem to have been cut out of the tape before it was dubbed on to the disc. R.F.

**CHOPIN. Sonata No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 35, "Funeral March". Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58. Julius Katchen (piano). Decca LXT5093 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Coupled as above:

Novae	(7/53) PL7360
Schiöler	(8/55) (H)ALP1243
Sonata No. 2:	
Backhaus	(2/51) LXT2535
Horowitz	(11/53) (H)ALP1087
Sonata No. 3:	
Malczewski	(12/52) 33C1005
Magaloff	(7/55) LXT5037
Lipatti	(5/56) 33C11337

Katchen plays these two sonatas superlatively well. His technique is astonishing, and, goodness knows, it needs to be for movements like the B flat minor scherzo and finale. But there is much more to this playing than mere technique. Katchen has fire and passion, and a sincere approach to this fine music that is always interesting even if one does not always see eye to eye with him over details. His momentary hesitations in the Funeral March—usually they occur on every other bar-line—become a little worrying once one has noticed the trick, but generally he plays this movement well enough, taking the trio section quietly and simply, as do Horowitz and Schiöler, whereas Novae is too eager to "make something of it". Katchen takes the last eight bars of the march *piano*, as does Schiöler. I do not know what justification there is for this. Horowitz and Novae play these bars as marked in standard editions. I find Horowitz's climax in this movement altogether more exciting than Katchen's or indeed than the other pianists listed above. But Katchen's almost dead-level playing in the wonderful *sotto voce* finale is, I think, the best of the lot. Schiöler is the most restrained of the pianists who have recorded this sonata, and some may prefer his "modern" unsentimental approach even though he has not quite the technique which Horowitz and Katchen bring to the most difficult passages. Horowitz is the most exuberant and extrovert, though his brilliant playing is handicapped by a recording quality of the usual hardness. Perhaps Katchen is not quite so realistically recorded as Schiöler, but by and large this is as good a disc of the B flat minor sonata as you can buy.

Anyone who already possesses Lipatti's record of the B minor will probably have no very burning desire for another version. Lipatti has Katchen's wonderful technique

coupled with an intensity and urgency that no normal pianist can hope to equal. His LP version is, of course, a transfer from 78s, and one which A.R. in a recent review found rather dull in tone. If you cannot manage without the finest modern disc quality, you will still find it hard to choose between Katchen and Magaloff. The quality on the Katchen record in this sonata seems to me just a shade less satisfying than that on the reverse side; he seems to have been recorded at a slightly lower level and perhaps at a greater distance. But to offset that, his playing has a little more emotional warmth than Magaloff's. A fine record. R.F.

**DEBUSSY. Preludes, Book 2. Friedrich Gulda (piano). Decca LXT5117 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Gianoli	(4/56) WLP6214
Gieseking	(11/55) 33CX1304

Gulda, like Casadesu, had previously given us only the first book of Debussy preludes, whereas Gieseking and Gianoli have done them all. Gulda's Book 2 is very much what one might expect: playing of great competence but lacking the sympathy and the light and shade that make Gieseking's discs such a pleasure to hear. Gulda is brilliant in *Les tierces alternées* and *Feux d'artifice*, and in a different vein *General Lavine* is excellently done. But this pianist seems to be rather less in touch with the atmospheric preludes. For instance, he takes *La puerta del Vino* too fast for a "Habanera" and plays it insensitively, almost with distaste. The recording is good, the piano quality better than Gieseking's, though not better than Gianoli's. Though I much enjoyed Gulda's playing of some of these preludes, he has very formidable rivals and he is not, I think, to be preferred to Gianoli, let alone Gieseking.

Incidentally something seems to have happened at bar 6 of *Feuilles mortes*; an extra beat has got in, and a momentary break at a point where the sound should be continuous. R.F.

**GRANADOS. Goyescas Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7. Alicia de Larrocha (piano). Brunswick AXTL1080 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Magaloff	(4/54) LXT2900
Ech niz	(9/55) WLP5322
A. Iturbi	(5/56) ALP1320

When I reviewed Miss Larrocha's first disc a little while back, I hoped that so good a pianist would receive better recording next time. Brunswick has seen to it that she has, though the piano tone is somewhat determinedly bright, and despite great clarity there is also a very noticeable tape hiss. But for all my admiration for this artist, and knowing full well that she was brought up in the Granados tradition by the composer's closest associates, I yet have to confess that, playing over her *Goyescas* against Magaloff's, my preference for the latter remains unshaken. Compared with his miraculously controlled performances, with their sense of line, variety of touch and sensitivity to nuance, Miss Larrocha's sound too consistently intense, forceful and brilliant. Her technique is impeccable and

sparkling, and her articulation faultlessly clear-cut. But she does not achieve Magaloff's purity and simplicity (in *Los Requebrados*), his exquisite poetry (in *Coloquio en la reja*), or his delicacy; we miss the candle-lit mystery in the *Fandango* and the cool night air in *La Maja y el Ruiseñor*. I do not want to over-state the case: Miss Larrocha has abundant vitality, and in *El Pelele*, clearly, fantasy too. It is simply her bad luck that so beautiful a recording should have preceded hers on the market. L.S.

**MOZART. Fantasia in C minor, K.475. Sonata No. 10 in C major, K.330. Sonata No. 14 in C minor, K.457. Rondo in A minor, K.511. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). Decca LXT5167 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

There may be some dispute about the performance of the C major Sonata, but I think most people will agree that this is the best of the three available LP sets of the C minor Fantasia and Sonata, and probably the best set made since the pre-war Gieseking one (which is not on hand for comparison, even if comparison were relevant). For reasons, no doubt, of convenient lay-out, Decca have separated the Fantasia from the Sonata (it would have been possible to get it all on to one side—Backhaus does not repeat the central section of the Sonata's first movement—but this would have made the other side seem very short). It is rather interesting to hear the Fantasia as a separate piece—it can stand on its own—but interesting only as a curiosity to hear it preface the galant sonata of eight years earlier!

Backhaus gives an imposing performance. You may feel that he takes the opening Adagio a little fast; but the handling is so broad that this can hardly be considered a "fault". He builds up the long movement with a fine architectural sense, working towards the climaxes with skill and departing from them most beautifully.

The first movement of the Sonata is full of happy strokes and nicely judged nuances, all of them subordinated to a finely determined drive. The Adagio, again, may be reckoned just a shade fast; but it is sensitively played. In the Finale Backhaus makes more than I remember any other pianist doing of the pleasantly deceitful cross-accents in the main theme. Usually one hears at once where the first beat of the bar lies; Backhaus almost tricks us and—it becomes clear this must have been what Mozart intended.

The performance of the C major Sonata is not for those who insist on strict time-keeping in Mozart. Backhaus is very free, apt to hurry and snatch. All the same, the way he plays the first movement is distinctly attractive, and the sudden, surprising ending is exquisitely done. The Andante cantabile is disappointing; one needs a steadier pulse when the tempo is so much slower, and in the Trio the tendency to hurry becomes distressing. The best thing in the Finale is Backhaus's well-shaped treatment of the tune that comes after the double bar, the one that anticipates



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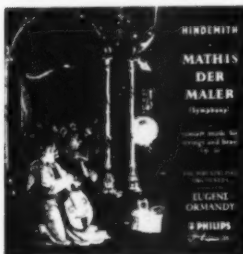
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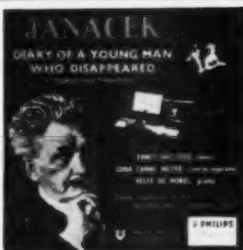
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Pamina's and Papageno's "Könnte jeder brave Mann".

The A minor Rondo receives a very Beethovenish kind of performance, impressive at first, but becoming rather heavy-seeming after the fourth repetition of the theme. It can do with more lilt; as played here, we may begin to weary of it.

On balance, I should call this a distinctly successful disc, one of the best among the still surprisingly meagre representation of Mozart's piano music in the catalogues. Certainly, the playing of these pieces has more character than there is in the Gieseking performances, in the integral Columbia recording. The recording is good, and so is the anonymous sleeve-note.

A.P.

**MUSIC FOR TWO PIANOS. Deutsche Tänze und Ecossais, Op. 33** (Schubert). **Der Rosenkavalier—Waltzes** (Strauss). **Italian Polka** (Rachmaninov). **L'embarquement pour Cythère** (Poulenc). **Slavonic Dance No. 10 in E minor, Op. 72, No. 2** (Dvořák). **Polovtsian Dances from "Prince Igor"** (Borodin). **Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin** (pianos). Brunswick AXTL1081 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

Fun to play, not such fun to listen to, would be a usual and not an unfair comment on much two-piano music. "Dances for Duo Pianos", as this disc is labelled, can grow tedious. Vronsky and Babin are brilliant, but not very winsome players. Their rhythm tends to be a bit heavy-handed, and so the Schubert (D.783), arranged up from single piano, is not especially charming. The Rachmaninov *Polka Italiana* would make a good "Dittersdorf": it would be hard to guess the composer. *Grove* lists it as a piano duet; it would seem to have been thickened out a bit for duo-keyboards. The Polovtsian Dances and the *Rosenkavalier* Waltzes have both been transcribed by Babin himself. The players make a remarkable noise in these, and give a pretty wonderful display; but who on earth wants such things on record when orchestral versions are obtainable? At best they make a showy stunt for the second half of a concert. The recording is clean and powerful: so is the playing.

A.P.

## CHORAL AND SONG

**BACH. Motet No. 2—"Der Geist hilft unsrer Schwachheit auf", BWV 226.** **Motet No. 6—"Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden", BWV 230.** **Berlin Motet Choir** conducted by **Günther Arndt**. Telefunken LGM65035 (10 in., 29s. 6½d.).

These two motets are sung unaccompanied with remarkable but exaggerated precision. No. 2, known in Britain as "The Spirit also helpeth us", seems to have been recorded by a larger body of singers than the other—no doubt because it is for double choir—and in a larger building; the quality is better and so is the singing. No. 6, "O Praise the Lord"

is for me the least interesting of Bach's six motets, though it comes to life in the final "Hallelujah" section. But, and this brings me to the great defect of this record, the singers bump every single accent from start to finish, four to a bar in the opening four-two section; furthermore they isolate each quaver, in the quaver runs, like violinists using separate bows, so that the music has a ghastly automaton atmosphere. In *Der Geist hilft* it is the semiquavers that are isolated, and there must be literally thousands of intrusive aitches on this disc. It must be very difficult to train a choir to sing like this, and to my mind it is very sad that anyone should attempt to do so. The final choral in *Der Geist hilft* offers few opportunities for a display of this technique and reveals the choir as the expressionless instrument it is. I must repeat that the singers do what is asked of them with great skill.

There are only seven to eight minutes of music on either side of this disc. R.F.

**COUPERIN. Trois Leçons de Ténèbres : Première leçon, "Incipit Lamentatio Jeremiae"; Deuxième leçon, "Et egressus est a filia Sion"; Troisième leçon, "Manum suam misit hostis". Pierrette Alarie** (soprano), **Basia Retchitzka** (soprano), **Antoine Geoffroy-Dechaume** (organ), **Manuel Recaseno** (basse d'archet). **Motet de Sainte Suzanne. Pierrette Alarie** (soprano), **Léopold Simoneau** (tenor), **Georges Abdoun** (bass), **Ensemble Vocal de Paris, Orchestre de Chambre Gérard Cartigny** conducted by **Ernest Bour**. London Ducretet-Thomson DTL93077 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

*Trois Leçons de Ténèbres :*  
Holetschek (6/55) WLP6387  
*Motet de Ste. Suzanne* Vyvyan, Herbert, etc. (11/55) OL80079

In this new Ducretet-Thomson and in the Nixa recording, the *Trois Leçons de Ténèbres* are not recognisable as the same work. Pierrette Alarie sings them sometimes twice as fast, sometimes as much as four times as fast, as Hugues Cuenod does. If it were not for the pitch of the accompaniment, you might think, when putting on the Ducretet-Thomson, that you had by mistake put on the Nixa LP at 78 r.p.m.!

The Swiss tenor sings this haunting music, with its long-spun vocalises, its smoky drifts of harmony, its sudden gleams and flashes, with a supple, delicate phrasing:

How exquisitely fine!

Feels at each thread, and lives along the line!

Cuenod's slow, controlled melismas are Mlle. Alarie's rapid trills. It is extraordinary to meet with two such widely differing conceptions of the same piece of music. Since the *Leçons* are *lamentationes*, not *jubilationes*, there seems little doubt as to which artist has the more authentic style; and D.S., who knows more about this sort of music than I do, also had nothing but praise for the Nixa record. Nevertheless, it is rather hard not to enjoy Mlle. Alarie's bird's-eye view of the music—though not in the profound way that we

enjoy Cuenod's performance. She is bright, exact, attractive. Each singer has found a worthy partner in the Third Lesson.

In the Nixa disc, Franz Holetschek uses a harpsichord for first and third lessons and an organ for the second, "exactly as Couperin indicated" (D.S.). The Ducretet-Thomson has an organ in all three. The Nixa sleeve prints a short note and all the words (more valuable than any note); the Ducretet-Thomson has only a note, by the organist of the performance, M. Geoffroy-Dechaume, who remarks in the course of it that "as regards the tempos, we have conformed to the metronome tempo markings which have been given to us by Sauveur, L'Affillard, Loulie, Ons en Bray, La Chapelle Choquel, by means of a marked time-piece or a metronome".

When *Leçons* are got through so quickly, they do not fill anything like a whole 12-inch disc. The space is used for the *Motet de Sainte Suzanne*, in which one of the most delightful of saints is invoked in captivatingly pretty music, with fresh, picturesque harmonies and a virginal purity in the caprices of the vocal line. The writing is sprightly and operatic, without being in the least frivolous (though on the label the soprano air "O Susanna" looks odd as the eye catches it). Here again there is a striking difference of interpretative policy between the two versions. Where Couperin wrote running quavers, Professor Lewis has his singers sing running quavers (as in the long set of divisions on the word "corona" in the second phrase of the motet). But M. Bour has his singers and players *lourer* such passages, with the first of each pair of notes accented and lengthened, the second touched on lightly and quickly.

I like the forthright, fresh singing of Léopold Simoneau here; the timbre is more attractive than William Herbert's, though the style seems almost a little too candid. I also prefer the voice of Mlle. Alarie (Mme. Simoneau) to Jennifer Vyvyan's. But George James's voice is more clearly defined than Georges Abdoun's. The conducting, however, is more sensitive in the English performance. A.P.

**MOZART. Eine Kleine Deutsche Kantate, K.619. "Die ihr unermesslichen Weltalls Schöpfer ehrt." Ridente la calma, K.152. Als Luise die Briefe, K.520. Sehnsucht nach dem Frühling, K.596. Komm, liebe Zither, K.351. Die Zufriedenheit, K.349. An die Einsamkeit, K.391. Abendempfindung, K.423. Maria Ribbing** (soprano), **Stig Ribbing** (piano), **Ebbe Grims-Land** (mandolin). H.M.V. BLP61 (10 in., 29s. 6½d.).

The little Masonic cantata on the first side of this disc is said on the sleeve-note not to be mentioned in the last edition of Köchel's catalogue (1947), but as it appears in the index of Einstein's book on the composer (1946) and is certainly in the 1951 *Kleine Köchel*, which I possess, the statement is not accurate. The manuscript of the work was given by a Swedish diplomat to the Uppsala University Library in the



eighteenth century. He wrote to his brother that he had amused himself by going through all Mozart's manuscripts before the composer's widow sold them to the printers and, later, that he possessed "a wealth of them", including this Cantata. He had also amused himself by playing piano duets and billiards (Mozart's favourite game) with Constanza.

The Cantata, composed about the period of *The Magic Flute*, alternates sections of recitative aria and has some phrases reminiscent of the opening section of the first aria for the Queen of Night. It is solemn and effective music and more interesting than the full-scale Masonic cantatas recorded on Philips ABL3022.

Maria Ribbing has an attractive light soprano voice, not always under perfect control, and sings the Cantata in excellent style. Her accompanist is a great-grandson of one of the brothers of the diplomat mentioned above. He plays well throughout, though not so stylishly as Gieseck in the songs duplicated on the Schwarzkopf Mozart disc (Columbia 33CX1321). This is particularly evident in the graceful phrases of the piano postludes in *Sehnsucht nach dem Frühlinge*, and in *Als Luise die Briefe*, in which Gieseck made a wonderful effect with the single last note, suggesting the last fragment of the letters had been burnt up, but which Stig Ribbing plays merely as a high treble note of no special significance.

Miss Ribbing sings charmingly in all the songs (and poignantly in the one about Luisa's burning of the love letters) and phrases well, but has not Schwarzkopf's distinction of style, nor does she sound quite at ease in the Italian of *Ridente la calma*. *Komm, lieber Zither* and *Die Zufriedenheit*, both sung to mandoline accompaniment, are delightful. Recording and balance are good. The sleeve-note is printed in Swedish and English. A.R.

**SCHUBERT. Der Strom. Der Wanderer, Op. 65, No. 2 (Schlegel). Totengräbers Heimweh (Craigher). Auf der Donau, Op. 21, No. 1 (Mayrhofer). Fischerweise, Op. 96, No. 4 (Schlecht). Der zürnende Barde (Bruchman). Gruppe aus dem Tartarus, Op. 24, No. 1 (Schiller). Heinz Rehfuss (baritone), Frank Martin (piano). Decca LW5235 (10 in., 19s. 6d.).**

Three of these songs do not seem ever to have been recorded before and all of them are welcome additions to the catalogues. Of these songs, *Der Strom* and *Auf der Donau* are "water music" and *Der Wanderer* a lyrical song wholly unlike the familiar one with the same title.

Heinz Rehfuss's forthright, if not very subtle, singing shows to great advantage in the vigorous measures of *Der Strom* and *Der zürnende Barde* (which Richard Capel called Schubert's "jolliest bass song") and his fine bass-baritone gives the necessary weight to the agonised cries of "Ewigkeit" in the superb dramatic song *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*. He is unable to fine his tone down to the required level in his singing of the lovely melody of *Der Wanderer* (which is

effectively doubled in the 'cello register of the piano) and for the same reason he misses some of the eerie effect of *Auf der Donau* (the poem is a typically gloomy example of Mayrhofer's muse), but he has the low F sharp for the end of Schubert's highly imaginative setting. (The song begins in E flat major and ends in F sharp minor.)

Fischer-Dieskau recorded *Totengräbers Heimweh* on H.M.V. ALP1295, and comparing the two renderings I find honours are about easy. Rehfuss's voice is better suited to the song—Fischer-Dieskau sounds too refined a grave-digger—but his inability to sing below mezzo-forte robs the lament in the latter part of the song of some of the poignance the other artist brought out so well. Frank Martin, in all else a satisfactory accompanist, begins the song not only too slowly (Gerald Moore's tempo, on the other hand, was perhaps a shade too fast) but halts the rhythm of the first and third beats of the marching bass figure. Gerald Moore secures the *fp* marked without doing this.

Mr. Rehfuss is recorded with undue prominence and so his voice is more reverberant than is natural, but in spite of this, and other points noted, this is an enjoyable recital and made all the more so by the printing of the German words, with English prose translations, on a leaflet contained in the cover. A.R.

#### SCHUBERT. Mass in G major.

Yvonne Ciannella (soprano), Raymond Keast (baritone), Walter Carringer (tenor), Robert Shaw Chorale and String Ensemble conducted by Robert Shaw. Sung in Latin.

**CHORAL RECITAL. Motet: Komm, Jesu, komm (Bach) with String Ensemble. Der Abend, Op. 64, No. 2; Nächtens, Op. 112, No. 2; Zum Schluss, Op. 65, No. 15 (Brahms). Robert Shaw Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw with John Wustman and James MacInnes (pianos). Sung in German. H.M.V. ALP1360 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Mass in G major:

V.S.O., Acad. Choir, Grossmann (7/53) PL7510

This is a pleasant record. The singers, both choir and soloists, have a fresh, youthful quality that is attractive, especially in the Schubert Mass, which is itself fresh and youthful. This is a small-scale work written by the composer when he was still in his 'teens and hardly aware of the full meaning of the words. He contrives a surprisingly successful Credo in a single section of march-like music without any rhythmic variety whatever, and I found the Benedictus for the three solo voices most beautiful. The accompaniment is for strings alone, and on this record a small string band is used, in keeping with the scale of the music. The balance is very good, and so is the quality of the sound. A.R. complained, when reviewing the rival Viennese recording, of the poor quality of the violins while in other respects finding this recording excellent. The violin tone on the new American disc is better, though I do not otherwise find much to choose between the two. I think Robert Shaw tries

to make too much of the Kyrie, and I prefer the quieter, more unobtrusive and devotional version from Vienna. On both discs the bass is less attractive than the other soloists, but I would not complain of any of them.

Anyone who already has the Viennese version of the Schubert Mass will not need to change, but for new customers the music on the back may be a decisive factor. I do not myself wish to hear Schubert's "Song of Miriam" again for some time, and find the backing to the new disc altogether more attractive. The Bach motet, "Komm, Jesu, komm", is a sublime piece of music, excellently sung here with an unobtrusive string accompaniment which solves all intonation problems and in any case is probably authentic. I wish it were possible to distinguish between the two choirs in such music. Over and over again Bach writes phrases which he wants tossed to and fro between two choirs placed in different parts of the church; the effect can be immensely exciting. Anyone listening to this disc without the music in front of him would never know that two choirs were singing; the antiphonal effects go for nothing at all. I believe that the best solution is to have one choir a good deal farther from the microphone than the other for these antiphonal sections; the listener is then in effect in the same position as someone in the church sitting much nearer to one choir than to the other, and that is not at all a bad place to be. I am sure that this is the only way of conveying a composer's antiphonal intentions until such time as we all have binaural listening.

It remains for me to add that this record also contains some little-known and rather sombre Brahms pieces for choir and piano accompaniment, and that these, like the rest of the music, are nicely sung and recorded. R.F.

**STRAVINSKY. Renard. Michel Sénéchal and Hugues Cuenod (tenors); Heinz Rehfuss (baritone); Xavier Depraz (bass); Istvan Arato (cimbalom). Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Apollo Musagetes. Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Decca LXT5169 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).**

Apollo Musagetes:

Vienna Chbr., Hollreiser

(4/55) PL8270

Congratulations and thanks to Decca not only at having produced the first recording of *Renard* to be issued in this country, but on having made it such a crackerjack one. The work (written in 1916-7), it should perhaps be explained, is a burlesque adapted from Russian folk stories with a text by Stravinsky (French translation by Ramuz), and was first performed by the Diaghilev company in 1922: it concerns a fox who seizes a cock whom he persuades to jump down from his perch, but who is himself caught by a cat and a goat. It is scored for seven wind instruments, five strings, cimbalom and percussion—a combination from which Stravinsky extracts original and fantastic sonorities—and employs four voices, each of which characterises one of the animals. The vocal parts, wildly



# August Releases

**BACH, J. S.**

Concerto for Harpsichord and Orchestra No. 1  
in D minor (BWV 1052)

Concerto for Harpsichord and Orchestra No. 2  
in E (BWV 1053)

Helma Elsner, harpsichord—Pro Musica Orches-  
tra, Stuttgart (Reinhardt)

1—12-in. record

PL 9510

**MOZART**

String Quartet in F, K.158

String Quartet in B flat, K.159

String Quartet in E flat, K.160 (E-K.159a)

The Barchet Quartet

1—12-in. record

PL 8690

**ROMANTIC OVERTURES**

WEBER : Oberon—Der Freischütz—Euryanthe

MEYERBEER : Ruy Blas—The Hebrides

SCHUBERT : Rosamunde

Bamberg Symphony (Perlea)

1—12-in. record

PL 9590

**STRAUSS, RICHARD**

Metamorphoses for 23 Solo Strings

Four Last Songs

Christel Goltz, soprano—Pro Musica Symphony  
Orchestra, Vienna — Bamberg Symphony  
(Hollreiser)

1—12-in. record

PL 9400

**STRAVINSKY**

Concerto in D for Violin

Duo Concertant

Jeu de Cartes (A Card Game) Ballet

Soloists—Concerts Colonne Orchestra, Paris—

Bamberg Symphony (Byrns, Hollreiser)

1—12-in. record

PL 9410

## Some Comments . . . .

**BRUCKNER**

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The Monthly Letter (EMG) June, 1956

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Desmond Shawe-Taylor—The Observer,  
24 June, 1956

Wührer has recorded among others for Vox:

**BEETHOVEN**

Fantasia in C minor for Piano, Chorus and Orchestra, Op. 80  
Akademie Kammerchor—Vienna Symphony (Krauss)

(with Schubert, Song of the Spirits over the Water) PL 6480

**BRAHMS—LISZT—SCHUMANN**

Paganini Variations

PL 8850

**SCHUBERT**

Sonata in A for the Pianoforte (D.664)

Sonata in G for the Pianoforte (D.894)

PL 8590

Sonata in B for Pianoforte (D.575)

Sonata in C minor for the Pianoforte (D.958)

PL 8420

**WEBER**

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 1 in C, Op. 11

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 2 in E flat, Op. 32

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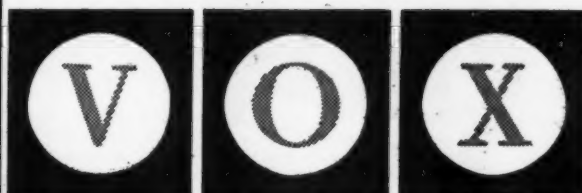
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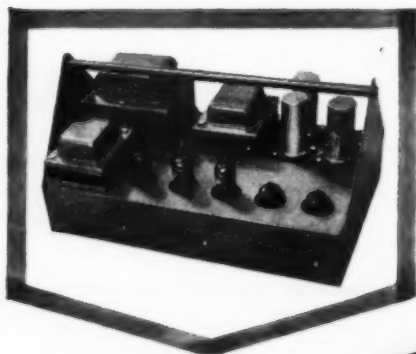
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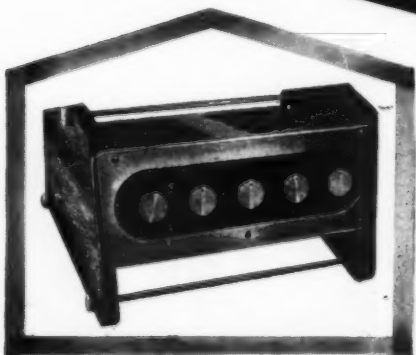
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difficult to sing, are handled with virtuosity by the soloists here (I hope the sleeve, which I have not yet seen, will give the words); Ansermet is in his element in securing precise playing; and the recording is Decca's most vivid. An intriguing frolic.

*Apollo Musagetes*, also first produced by Diaghilev (in Paris, 1928) although commissioned for a festival in Washington, is Stravinsky in his "statuesque" classic style. It is a *ballet blanc* whose Greek mythological subject suggested to the composer using a string orchestra, a diatonic idiom and classic forms. Though some of the dance variations are of less interest, Stravinsky was inspired to write noble music for the god Apollo himself; and the final *Apotheosis*—like the ending of the *Symphony of Psalms*—shows a haunting use of repeated thematic fragments. Decca takes a side-and-a-third over the work, as against Vox's single side (though the timings of the two are within five seconds of each other), so that considerations of coupling and of expense may enter into one's choice; but the important criteria are performance and recording. On the former count, Holreiser is more austere, Ansermet more expressive and graceful (e.g. the *Pas d'action* for Apollo and the three Muses), though at the same time trenchant and exciting (as in the *Coda*); as to the technical quality, Decca gets a more "covered," slightly woolly, tone at the start, compared with Vox's crystal-clear forward quality, but there is richness too, as in the big slashed chords in Apollo's second variation. Whichever version you decide on, you will have a fine disc.

P.B.

**MARAN SONG RECITAL. Ständchen**  
—No. 4 from "Schwanengesang" (Schubert). *Ich liebe dich* (Beethoven). *Minnelied*, Op. 71, No. 5 (Brahms). *None but the Lonely Heart*, Op. 6, No. 6 (Tchaikovsky). *I love thee*, Op. 5, No. 3 (Grieg). *Elegie* (Massenet). *Widmung*, Op. 25, No. 1 (Schumann). **George Maran** (tenor), **Ivor Newton** (piano). Decca LW5232 (10 in., 19s. 6d.).

George Maran, an American tenor who sings in Salzburg, is not unknown to collectors: he appears to advantage in the Decca complete *Messiah*, and less satisfactorily on Philips' *Finta Semplice*. Here he makes his solo disc début with a recital of "Famous Love Songs".

One begins with a very favourable impression. In Schubert's *Serenade*, Mr. Maran sounds attractively youthful and ardent. The impression is intimate, as if he were singing in a small room, softly and as beautifully as possible, and with much feeling. But as the recital progresses, the effect grows monotonous. We may start by forgiving the unformed style, because of the sincerity; after a while the lack of any kind of energising begins to become wearisome, and by the time we reach *Widmung*, which must have some vigour in the declamation, we may feel like prescribing a course of super-vitamins!

Mr. Maran's French (in the Massenet) is not very happy; his English is sometimes

affected by an attack of "singer's vowels": "Narn bart tha lonely heart . . . glardness", etc. Yet the voice is a very pleasant one; though the low notes are only just filled out, the tone only just rounded. The turn in *Widmung* is not very skilfully negotiated. The recording must have been with the singer very close to the microphone, since we clearly hear every breath. The effect of intimacy is not unsuitable, but Ivor Newton's piano accompaniment is a shade "plummily" recorded. A.P.

**AN ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH SONG, Vol. 1. Fair, sweet, cruel** (Ford). **Come sorrow, come; It was a lover and his lass; Mistress mine, well may you fare** (Morley). **What then is love but mourning; When Laura smiles** (Rosseter). **I saw my lady weep; Awake, sweet love; In darkness let me dwell** (Dowland). **Peter Pears** (tenor), **Julian Bream** (lute). Decca LW5243 (10 in., 19s. 6d.).

Last June I reviewed Volume 3 of this anthology, containing twentieth century English songs. Volume 1 contains Elizabethan lute songs, to which Peter Pears again brings his sensitive way with English words, his characteristic timbre and his very individual way of placing a phrase within his voice. Julian Bream provides a most beautifully fashioned accompaniment. Yet the record is best not played through at a sitting, for a certain monotony of timbre results. One starts to wonder whether it would not have been a good idea to have a contrasting voice for some of the songs—and to have included, perhaps, a Morley two-part canon. Played singly, however, the songs afford great pleasure; there is hardly any need at this date to write about the felicities and light touch of Morley, or about Dowland's expressive music. Mr. Pears's voice is perhaps a little heavy for some of the Morley songs. The recording is very clear, and made at a very high level; listeners will find that they must turn the volume control unexpectedly far down if the result is not to be uncomfortable. A.P.

**ROBIN RECITAL. Il bacio** (Arditi). **Theme and Variations** (Proch). **Villanelle** (Dell'Acqua). **Rossignol** (Alabiev). **Mado Robin** (soprano), **London Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Anatole Fistoulari**. Decca LW5239 (10 in., 19s. 6d.).

Mado Robin's voice, which was at its best in the reflective passages of *Lakmé*, as far as recordings are concerned, had a very appealing, shallow charm. Of course, it is not the kind of charm to which the English ear easily surrenders (we tend to like port wine contralto types more readily). The first effect of playing this record is to reflect that true though the recording apparently is, Mme Robin's voice has become thinner and more shallow. But it is largely an illusion. Repeated hearings show that in the cantante part of it, as opposed to the sensational *attissimo* (which is often rather more like whistling than singing), there is much grace and even a pretty colour.

However, in *Il Bacio* and in the *Villanelle* I would opt for the versions recently made by Rita Streich on Deutsche Grammophon as being more attractive. Mme Robin never sounds laboured in her upward flights, though some of the things that she or someone had thought out for her to do are laboured in the extreme; the *Nightingale* for instance, gains nothing at all by having an agility test incorporated in its tail. The Proch variations sound rather heartless and the intonation in passing notes is not everywhere precise—a fault from which Galli Curci also suffered *passim*.

The technical feat of such singing is not so amazing as it seems—given a voice of this kind. It is when such coloratura is asked for from a dramatic soprano that we begin to wonder if some secret in the teaching of singing has been lost. The *altissimo* notes up to a B flat sung on this record by Mme Robin are those which caused Mozart to marvel when he heard Aguiari.

Those who like hurdling races will get a lot of fun from setting Mme Robin jumping alongside Miliza Korjus and Erna Sack. P.H.-W.

**TRADITIONAL SONGS. Lord Rendal; O no John; I'm seventeen come Sunday** (arr. Sharp); **How deep in love am I** (arr. Hughes); **Jan** (arr. Benjamin); **Soldier, Soldier; O can ye sew cushions. Norma Proctor** (contralto), **Alec Redshaw** (piano). Decca LW5248 (10 in., 19s. 6d.).

There is much to delight on this record; I particularly enjoyed *Jan* which was new to me and on whose origins I can only speculate. And Norma Proctor does splendidly by *Lord Rendal*, far the biggest song on the disc. In the coy numbers she is much less happy. *O no, John* sounds charming sung dead-pan by schoolchildren, but what on earth is a modern fully-trained singer to make of it? If the song is "acted", and Miss Proctor acts with her voice for all she is worth, one is irresistibly reminded of Edwardiana such as the unforgettable record of Clara Butt and her husband singing *The Keys of Heaven*. Miss Proctor's over-careful elocution suggests no very deep knowledge of the soil, and good folk-singers surely must have an earthy quality somewhere in their make-up, a basic simplicity. And a genuine folk-singer would, of course, have sung these words just as dead-pan as children do; they always left the words to convey the meaning and kept the singing almost expressionless. This record also raises the accompaniment problem. If you must have an accompaniment at all, it should surely be unassertive, at any rate in a genuine folk-song. The accompaniment to *Soldier, soldier* on this disc sounds like an imitation of *Façaade*, and that to *How deep in love am I?* takes every speck of traditional or folk atmosphere out of the tune and turns it into a not-very-good art-song. But Miss Proctor can sing all right when she has the right song to get her teeth into. She makes beautiful sounds in *O can ye sew cushions*, and *Jan* is delightful. R.F.

## OPERATIC

BRITTEN. *The Little Sweep.*

Sam David Hemmings (treble)  
 Rowan Jennifer Vyvyan (sop.)  
 Miss Baggott Nancy Thomas (con.)  
 Juliet Brook April Cantelo (sop.)  
 Black Bob } Trevor Anthony (bass)  
 Tom }  
 Clem }  
 Alfred } Peter Pears (tenor)  
 Gay Brook Michael Ingram (treble)  
 Sophie Brook Marilyn Baker (sop.)  
 Johnny Crome

Robin Fairhurst (treble)  
 Hugh Crome Lyn Vaughan (treble)  
 Tina Crome Gabrielle Soskin (sop.)  
**English Opera Group Orchestra,  
 Choir of Alleyn's School** conducted  
 by **Benjamin Britten.** Decca LXT  
 5163 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

*Let's Make an Opera* has made so many friends that a record of the little opera itself is most welcome. Those who have enjoyed this unusual entertainment in the theatre will forgive me if I briefly explain what happens.

The 1st Act of *Let's Make an Opera* has no music in it: it is a scene in which a number of children, helped by the grown-ups, decide that instead of the usual Christmas play, they will do an opera, writing it to suit themselves (one of the grown-ups is most conveniently an excellent composer) and staging the whole thing. The 2nd Act is a rehearsal of the opera—and it is here that the theatre audience is drawn in and asked to sing four songs which are to serve as Overture, Entr'actes and Finale. The 3rd Act is the performance of the opera itself, *The Little Sweep* (a story of the bad old days when chimney-sweeps used small boys to climb the chimneys and didn't use them too well), and it is this that is recorded here.

It is a first-class performance by what may be called a star-studded cast and of a standard that one is unlikely to get in a theatre run. (Peter Pears, for instance, is hardly likely ever to sing this, for he scarcely has a solo phrase to himself.) The composer, who has never conducted this piece in the theatre—daunted, no doubt, by having to teach the audience their songs—gives a taut, polished and extremely well-rehearsed performance. Speeds tend to be quick, but this exemplary cast can get away with them with clarity of words, even though one sometimes feels that they are only just managing it. That most effective Trio "Wait until we catch him", sung after the sweep's boy has disappeared, is an instance. "Phew!" one imagines the singers saying at the end of it, "that was a lick". Personally I think this Trio loses something of its effect, sounding excited but lacking emphasis: the characters have no time to sound *angry*. The composer's first thought, suggested in his direction *allegro pesante*, seems to me a better one.

The audience songs are slicker than they ever are in the theatre, but here there is no cause for complaint; in a recording it was wise not even to pretend that these are audience songs. And how good it is, in the beautiful *Night Song*, to hear the birds all

calling at their proper places in the bar and the sound rising and dying as the composer intended. In the theatre this was the one thing that beat the audience and it was impossible to do much more than let them enjoy themselves making their bird-calls without regard to the musical effect.

Jennifer Vyvyan brings lovely touches to some of Rowan's phrases, while April Cantelo is a most charming Juliet. Nancy Thomas as Miss Baggott is the one disappointment: she sounds rather plummy and is less convincing as a character than the others. The recording does not always catch her final consonants adequately. When, weary after the chase, she comes in, collapses on to a chair, and sings "Oh, my poor fee!", one feels that that is a matter she should take up with Decca. Actually, the final "t" is just there, but not adequately for those listeners who don't know the opera and want to enjoy it with ease. Everyone else is exemplary, including the men soloists, and the children mostly do well.

The opera has been well edited for non-visual hearing and Decca's recording is first-rate. The disc should make even more friends for this most attractive little piece. And to those who do not know it may I say that they will find it much more than a jolly children's opera: there are solo and ensemble pieces in it of great imagination.

T.H.

## HUMPERDINCK. "Hänsel und Gretel"

—Selection. **Renate Laude** (Hänsel), **Sonja Schöner** (Gretel), **Robert Koffmane** (Father), **Mimi Aarden** (Sandman), **Edeltraut Maria Michels** (Dew Fairy), **Orchestra of the Städtische Opera, Berlin**, conducted by **Wolfgang Martin.** Telefunken TM68054 (10 in., 19s. 6d.).

Drastic cuts must be expected in items chosen from an opera to make a "Selection", and the only ones to emerge whole on this disc are the "little man" song, the evening prayer duet, and the Sandman's song in Act 2, and the Dew Fairy's song in Act 3. From Act 1 there are the "prayer" section only of the Overture, a snatch of the dance-duet, the Father's story of the Witch, without the interjections by the Mother. The Witch herself never appears, but there is a bit of her "gallop" on the orchestra and of the children's duet "What odour delicious".

Selections of this kind are presumably meant for those who cannot afford, or do not want, the complete works from which they come: and certainly a taste of the cream (or should it be the gingerbread?) is given here in a reasonably good performance. The children's parts are well enough sung—Sonja Schöner is very charming in her little Act 2 song—and Robert Koffmane is excellent as the Father. But it was absurd to cast a hooty-fruity and scoopy voice for the soprano part of the Sandman: the texture of Mimi Aarden's voice is pure contralto. Horns lack mellowness, but the strings sound well and the balance is adequate. The lovely Columbia recording of the complete opera is, of course, in another class altogether.

A.R.

**MOZART. Se all'impero** from "Lé Clemenza di Tito". **Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön** from "Die Zauberflöte". **Ich baue ganz und O wie ängstlich** from "Die Entführung aus dem Serail". **Torna la pace** from "Idomeneo". **Concert Aria, K.431. Léopold Simoneau** (tenor). **Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs Elysées** conducted by **André Jouve.** London Ducretet-Thomson DTL93091 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

A collection of Mozart arias by this tenor would in any case be welcome, and the tactful selection is the more so because it includes two arias we ought to know better. That from *Titus* is comparatively conventional, but the last aria for the hero in *Idomeneo* where he gives Idamante to the people and trusts that peace will return is a most beautiful page of Mozart and certainly deserves its place. The other arias bring this tenor into rivalry with quite a few practitioners. His good points are to be appreciated, but some of the reasons why we liked him so much in actual performances—a sturdy projection of tone, a masculine yet not insensitive turn of phrasing and a presence—do not count so much on a record as you might think. Many a tenorino might in fact produce an impression of superior smoothness and a finer grain of tone. In "O wie ängstlich" for instance, an explosive effect is not avoided and the long runs of "Ich baue ganz" sound effortful, with some unpleasant edge to the quality of the tone. But the singing is never unimaginative—the concert aria is finely realised.

The voice is too near for my taste and the orchestra sounds dull, even dead. The recording is on the dry side. But the balance in favour of the recital is pretty strong for those who are attracted by the programme. Mozart tenors of this kind don't grow on every bush.

P.H.-W.

**MOZART. Motet—Exultate, jubilate** (a). **O zitt're nicht und Der Hölle Rache** from "Die Zauberflöte" (b). **Non so più, Voi che sapete** from "Le Nozze di Figaro" (b). **Concert Aria, K.316: Popoli di Tessaglia. Welche Wonne, welche Lust** from "Die Entführung" (b). **L'amerò, sarò costante** from "Il Rè Pastore" (b). **Pierrette Alarie** (soprano). (a) **Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris** and (b) **Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs Elysées** both conducted by **André Jouve.** London Ducretet-Thomson DTL93089 (12 in., 39s. 7½d.).

There is a considerable amount of good and skilful singing (as befits a pupil of Elisabeth Schumann) on this disc, and that it is not a complete success must be attributed not only to the singer but also to the conductor and the recording. In regard to the latter the violins are thin and rather papery in tone and the voice catches the microphone (if that is the correct term) too often for comfortable listening, a fault particularly noticeable in *Non so più*. André Jouve's accompanying is not more





*Sir John Barbirolli, pictured with Ralph Vaughan Williams and his wife*

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Extract from Cecil Watts from 'Record News.'

Mr. James Walker, the Borough Librarian of Hendon, has kindly sent me a selection of specimens recently withdrawn after an average issue of 80 times. He remarks that each issue of course probably represents at least 2 or 3 playings, which means that each record has been played a minimum of 160 times with at least 80 different pick-ups. On examination the first outstanding fact is the remarkably clean state of all the records. I am told that before each issue every record is cleaned with "Clendisc."



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than adequate and sounds heavy-handed in the first movement of the Motet and insufficiently sensitive at several points. In the *Figaro* arias Pierrette Alarie is much less good than elsewhere. She is too mature a Cherubino and keeps a poor line, and the way she and the orchestra chase each other up the scale to the held notes in the last part of *Non so più* would have given Elisabeth Schumann a fit. The former pupil, however, does her teacher great credit in the neatness and accuracy with which she sings the florid portions of the four arias in which these occur and of the motet.

She is shrill at times in the *Larghetto* of the first Queen of Night aria and her tone is apt to spread—as, for example, at “Ach helft!”—but she steadies up in the Allegro. In the second aria the singer sounds really revengeful, but pressure on her tone makes the opening phrases ugly. I hope, however, that my rightly demanding colleague, Desmond Shawe-Taylor, will agree that the rapid triplet figures are sung with a great deal more precision than usual. The inclusion, on this disc, of one of the finest and perhaps the most difficult of the seven concert arias Mozart composed for Aloysia Weber is most welcome. The text, by Calzabigi, comes from the first act of *Alceste* (as set by Gluck) and is the Queen's address to the people of Thessaly. Pledged to the gods to die in place of her husband, she joins her people in their lamentations and prayers.

The noble and moving recitative is followed by a slow and expressive section with a lovely theme that Mozart recalls in the slow movement of the E flat Piano Concerto, K. 449, of five years later (a fact that seems to have escaped the notice of the commentators) and this by a quick section with a coda. In the latter the singer has to ascend the scale, in a passage made up of triplets and detached quavers, from C<sup>1</sup> to G<sup>2</sup>, besides other even more difficult passages: and in the *Andantino* she has to execute trills on four successive high notes—something found very hard by singers to-day.

Taken as a whole, Pierrette Alarie gives a very impressive performance of this *scena*—of which Mozart himself had a high opinion. Her declamation in the recitative is good—she sounds more at ease in Italian than German and her words are better articulated—and her trills quite lovely. Her soft singing, as she moves from a held note into another statement of the opening tune, is very beautiful and the long high notes are securely held. Enough has been said to indicate, I hope, what a great achievement this performance is.

The motet is also very well sung and the slow movement, which can be dull, is expressively done. I wish, however, that the singer would be more consistent over the appoggiaturas. These she sometimes observes, but sometimes not, and this is very apparent in the recitative preceding the *Larghetto*. The cadenza in the first movement and the various florid passages in this and *Alleluia* are, once again, very well sung. *L'amero*, without the nineteenth century cadenza, is pleasantly done, but the violin solo is recorded with rather steely tone.

*Welche Wonne* needs lighter treatment and rather more sparkle.

If this artist could smooth out the inequalities in her tone when she sings above mezzo-forte she would be indeed formidable. Even as it is a singer who can perform the concert aria and the motet as well as she does is certainly one to be reckoned with and one that deserves to be recorded with the greatest care. A.R.

**WAGNER. Prelude, Act 1; Prelude, Act 3; Bridal Chorus** from “Lohengrin”. **Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Hilversum, Netherlands Opera Choir** conducted by **Paul van Kempen**. Philips NBE11028 (7 in., 11s. 10d.).

Presentable but in no way superlative accounts, fairly successfully put on to a seven-inch, of the three most played passages from *Lohengrin*. The celestial high strings of the first act prelude did not sound in my review copy quite free from fluctuation of pitch, but this is often a local defect only. The chorus singing the tune we know as “Here Comes the Bride, all dressed in white” (with various third-line versions) is quite pleasantly sung. The rip-roaring prelude to Act III shows the Dutch orchestra in good fettle. P.H.-W.

**WAGNER. Götterdämmerung.**

Brünnhilde **Kirsten Flagstad** (sop.)  
Siegfried **Set Svanholm** (tenor)  
Hagen **Egil Nordsjo** (bass)  
Gutrune **Ingrid Bjoner** (sop.)  
Waltraute

**Eva Gustavson** (mezzo-sop.)  
Gunter **Waldemar Johnsen** (bar.)  
Alberich **Per Grønneberg** (bar.)  
Woglinde

**Unni Bugge-Hanssen** (sop.)  
Welgunde

**Karen Marie Flagstad** (sop.)  
Flosshilde

**Beate Asserson** (mezzo-sop.)  
1st Norm **Eva Gustavson** (con.)  
2nd Norm

**Karen Marie Flagstad** (mezzo-sop.)  
3rd Norm **Ingrid Bjoner** (sop.)

**Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Norwegian State Radio Orchestra and Opera Chorus** conducted by **Oivin Fjeldstad**. Decca LXT5205-5210 (six 12 in., £11 17s. 9d.).

Those of our readers who heard Flagstad in a recent broadcast of Gluck's *Alceste* must have rejoiced to find her in such fine voice and, I imagine, what they will want to be told at the start of this review is how the great artist fares in the infinitely more demanding part of Brünnhilde in *Götterdämmerung*.

In answering that question it would be ingenuous to ignore the fact that Madame Flagstad is in her sixty-first year, and unintelligent to expect the notes of her voice above the stave to have all their former radiance, or always to be under perfect control: but that said, and wonder expressed that a dramatic soprano should be able, at such an age, to undertake so arduous a role (has it ever happened before?), one is left to listen with delight,

rarely qualified, to a performance of classic dignity and authority, and over and over again to note—as only a recording can allow one to do—special beauties of tone, fine points of phrasing, meaningful treatment of words, and the wonderful conception of the part, as a whole, that marked the Brünnhilde of her maturity. To this I will return after considering the rest of the cast in the present performance.

Svanholm's Siegfried is as familiar to many of us as Flagstad's Brünnhilde and this recording finds him, too, in excellent voice. A veteran artist, also, his long experience in this part is a great strength in the performance and he excels particularly in the narration in the last act, which he precedes with a ringing top C (“hoi-ho”!) on which, with the licence of tradition among heldentenors, he dwells *ad lib*.

I only wish it was possible to praise, in anything like the same terms, the Gunther of Waldemar Johnsen and the Hagen of Egil Nordsjo, but they are both disappointing. Gunther, though an honourable man, is a weak character, but that weakness should not extend to his voice. Mr. Johnsen seems to have little power or beauty of tone in his upper register and so cannot do justice, for example, to the fine music of Gunther's greetings to his sister, Brünnhilde and Siegfried in the second act. Even so, he might surely have put more meaning into his words, but in the great scene of the oath, in this same act, when Gunther recoils in horror from the plot to kill Siegfried, the mild way in which Mr. Johnsen utters “O Schmach! O Schande!” (“O dishonour! O disgrace!”) conveys nothing of the gibichung King's utter misery. The notes of the part are accurately sung, but this is a mere sketch of the character.

The inadequacy of Egil Nordsjo's Hagen is a more serious matter, for Hagen is the evil genius of this opera, and indeed the most malevolently evil character in *The Ring*. He must have a voice, and a conception of the character, able not only to dominate the scenes in which he appears (to be credible as the acknowledged leader of his rough following), but also to leave his malign influence disturbing the mind when he is absent from the stage.

There may well have been a time when Mr. Nordsjo could do all this, but that must have been long before this recording was made. His voice all too often develops a distressing wobble and lacks the power and the cutting edge it should have. The wonderful monologue in the first act “Hier sitz'ich zur Wacht” (“Here I sit and wait”) conveys little of Hagen's malevolence: and I must mention here (though this is nothing to do with the singer) a shocking cut of forty odd bars, after the voice ceases, which makes nonsense of his final evil cry. It is impossible to believe that the conductor authorised this and so one can only attribute it to some technical fault in the tape that was discovered too late to be rectified. Wagner, in the cut bars, makes one of his wonderful transitions from the themes of ruin and the lure of the Ring to the lovely phrase associated with Brünnhilde the woman, and the cut jumps the



music straight to the expressive phrase (so marked) where the transition is being finally accomplished. I do not want to labour the point, but to anyone who really knows the opera this is a distressing affair and must be deeply deplored.

To turn to happier matters. Per Grönneberg is an excellent Alberich and the chorus gives us some virile—if rather coarsely recorded—singing.

Ingrid Bjoner the Guttrune, and Eva Gustavson the Waltraute (both also appear in the Norns scene) are admirable artists. Miss Bjoner's voice is of most attractive quality and she knows how to act with it: she is a very appealing Guttrune, a character to whom Wagner has given some of the loveliest music in the opera. Eva Gustavson, also a good vocal actress, sees to it that the very moving scene of Waltraute's visit to Brünnhilde does not fail of its effect. With Karen Marie Flagstad worthily upholding the honour of the family name as second Norn and Welgunde, both the Norns' trio, with the two artists mentioned before, and the Rhinemaidens' Trio, with two other excellent artists, are in safe hands, and are very satisfyingly sung.

Of the many memorable things in Kirsten Flagstad's performance—and what an exciting moment it is when she is due to make her first entrance—I can only mention her rapturous cry of "O heilige Götter" ("O heavenly powers"), in the duet with Siegfried in the prologue, which is as thrilling as ever (it is understandable that she does not attempt the high C at the end of this duet but remains on the A flat of the preceding bar) and, without sparing herself, the dramatic way in which she denounces Siegfried in the great outburst in the second act, taking a perfectly centred high B flat (unaccompanied) as she cries "dem Manne" ("that man"). Her rich lower tones at the start of the fifth scene in this act, when Brünnhilde muses on the terrible change that has come over Siegfried, are most beautiful: and it is left to her to carry the tremendous scene of the oath to success.

She is not, it must be admitted, in such good voice for the closing scene—the recording here is also rather distant—and it is fortunate that we have her fine performance of this scene, with Furtwängler, splendidly recorded on H.M.V. ALP1016.

The recording itself is one of the too familiar kind in which the comfortable room level for the voices unduly dims the orchestra and robs the climaxes of their effectiveness, so that one can only really judge the value of the orchestra's contribution by turning up the volume in passages which it has to itself—not a satisfactory proceeding.

It becomes clear, however, that the strings are very good and have a fine singing tone, the brass are excellent, but the woodwind not quite on the same level—or, perhaps they may suffer from their placing, as they are often too weak in relation to the rest of the orchestra.

There is no doubt about the conductor's understanding of the great score. The well known "set pieces" are finely interpreted—the Funeral March especially—and also sections less well known, such as the superb

prelude to the second act and the brief "dawn" music with which the second scene of this act begins.

Oivin Fjeldstad, a name new to me, is evidently a fine musician: alert and vital in the dramatic passages, sensitive in the lyrical ones, and with the ability to keep the heroic design of the work always before him.

In spite of the criticisms I have made the performance, to my mind, does honour, as a whole, to Norway and will be justly valued for its own sake, as a souvenir of Flagstad in her greatest part, and as the first (practically) complete recording of *Götterdämmerung*. A.R.

## POETRY AND DICTION, Etc.

**L'ESPRIT DE PARIS. Pensées de Sacha Guitry. Pensées des autres. Sacha Guitry with Pierre Spiers at the piano.** Decca LK4125 (12 in., 35s. 1½d.).

Sacha Guitry's dark, sad witty tones have many admirers. One of Yvonne Printemps's most enchanting old records was backed with *reflexions* of the kind found on one side of this LP. But that lasted five minutes. Twenty-five minutes is another matter. Guitry is no profound moralist and what he has to say about life as a Parisian does not bear an infinity of repetitions—at least that is my view and I count myself a most ardent admirer of this versatile man of the theatre.

What is less tolerable is the reverse side. Here, against a background of celestial harp noises, Guitry fires off, with flat, laconic indifference, like one reading aloud from a dictionary of quotations in time to a metronome, a series of aphorisms, most faintly cynical, from all and sundry. Anatole France or Wilde, even our friend Anon, have their epigrams announced and ticketed. It is a fantastically boring way of using Guitry. One finds oneself capping the duller observations after a time. Thus, "Peu de gens sont admirés par leurs domestiques—Montaigne", says M. Guitry. "Few people to-day even have domestiques to despise them—Hope-Wallace."

P.H.-W.

## O'CASEY. Juno and the Paycock.

"Captain" Jack Boyle

Juno Boyle	Seamus Kavanagh
Johnny Boyle	Siobhan McKenna
Mary Boyle	Leo Leyden
Joxer Daly	Maureen Cusack
Mrs. Maisie Madigan	Cyril Cusack
"Needle" Nugent	Maire Kean
Mrs. Tancred	Harry Brogan
Jerry Devine	May Craig
Charlie Bentham	Milo O'Shea
An Irregular Mobilizer	Gerard Healy

Sewing Machine Man	Godfrey Quigley
Coal-Block Vendor	Alex Dignam
A Neighbour	Alex Dignam
Furniture-Removal Man	Maureen Toal

John McDarby  
Columbia 33CCX1-2 (two 12 in., 79s. 3d.).

The play is introduced by Sean O'Casey himself—a selling point; and there is an excellent sleeve-note by Alan Dent, the

dramatic critic. The production by Cyril Cusack is authentic and largely good and clear. I do not think *THE GRAMOPHONE* is the place to discuss at length the play's positive virtues. The late James Agate told me he thought it, after *St. Joan*, the finest play written between the two wars. If I were asked what I thought the most moving moment I had ever experienced in a play I am not sure I wouldn't have singled out the end of this play when Sara Allgood says: "Dear Mother of God, where were you when my darling son was riddled with bullets?" I cannot pretend that Siobhan McKenna, superb actress though she be, makes me forget Miss Allgood in this part. She even accents the lines differently (unless my memory is playing tricks). Nor do I think that Maire Kean comes near to the punch Maire O'Neill put into that wonderful summary of police conduct, "the polis as polis 'being' null and void". But I am delighted that so good an account of the play should have been got onto disc and it may even be—for Mr. Cusack is the most sensitive of producers—that what I am missing is something exaggerated which was laid on a bit thick for us English over in London and that what we hear in this version is truer, by Dublin standards. It will go over big in Irish-American circles.

P.H.-W.

## CLASSICAL REISSUES

Not a very interesting batch this month, though those who prefer to collect Kathleen Ferrier in single discs rather than recitals will be glad of three non-extended 45s: 71130, with Brahms's *Sapphic Ode* and *Botschaft* and Schumann's Rückert settings, *Volksliedchen* and *Widmung*; 71138, with the "Qui sedes" and "Agnus Dei" from the Mass in B minor; and 71139, four Roger Quilter songs, *To Daisies*, *Over the Mountains*, *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal* and *Fair House of Joy*. (All records are Decca this month except where otherwise mentioned). That completes the vocals.

Campoli starts the instrumental section, with two Wieniawski Caprices, A minor and E flat, on 71136. A Kempff coupling of two Brahms Intermezzi, Opus 117, Nos. 1 and 2, is attractive (71132); rather less so is the same pianist's disc of the "Wachet auf" chorale and "Jesu joy of man's desiring", in his own transcriptions, on 71124. Karl Richter gives us some enjoyable organ playing on 71125, two Bach chorale preludes, "Ich ruf' zu dir" and "Kommst du nun, Jesu". Peter Katin's account of Liszt's D flat *Consolation* is not very consolatory; the A flat *Liebestraum* on the back has more poetry (71137).

The only orchestral disc is a Tchaikovsky ballet coupling: the *Valse des Fleurs* from *Nutcracker* and the *Sleeping Beauty* Waltz (a Philips EP, NBE11029), both with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, conducted respectively by Moralt and van Otterloo. There are more attractive versions available of both pieces. The sleeve is decorated with daffodils—"tossing their heads in a sprightly dance", no doubt. But who ever thought of the *Valse des Fleurs* being danced by Wordsworthian daffs? A.P.



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LXT 5124

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Johnny Douglas LK 4132

MOZART  
Piano Concerto No.27 in B flat  
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Wilhelm Backhaus LXT 5123

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Frank Chacksfield LK 4135



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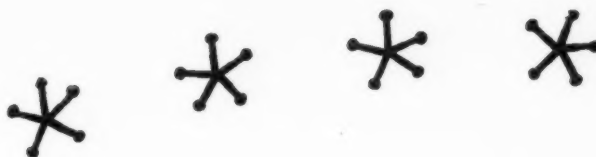
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Decca publish Highlights from their complete *Princess Ida* and *The Pirates of Penzance* recordings, coupled on LK4128. The selections have been well chosen and are not confined to the obvious numbers. For instance, the *Ida* includes the entrance of the three brothers into Castle Adamant and the excerpt continues to the end of Hilarion's song. Both Gama's songs are here and much else, though the fine Second Act finale, perhaps Sullivan's most sustained piece of writing, cannot be accommodated. This was the opera for which the D'Oyly Carte Company engaged outside singers—Victoria Sladen and Thomas Round. It shows off the present Company, while the *Pirates*, an older recording, takes us back to Martyn Green and Darrell Fancourt. Now all we have to do is to wait till Mr. Norman Tucker assembles his gala casts in 1961, unless he is forestalled by Mr. David Webster! R.W.

### IMPORTED RECORDS

On Erato LDE1041-2 (two seven-inch 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  r.p.m. discs) the excellent vocal ensemble directed by Philippe Caillard has recorded a number of Renaissance motets for the seasons of Christmas and Easter.

The inclusion of four motets by Lassus, out of the total of ten on these discs, is particularly welcome: for the music of this great composer, in all its astonishing variety, is still very little known.

The Epiphany motet *Videntes stellam Magi* begins with a striking piece of tone painting depicting the star that led the Wise Men to Bethlehem and there is another such effect in the Maundy Thursday responsory, *Tristis est anima mea*, depicting the surging crowd. The other two motets by Lassus, *Resonet in laudibus* (in three sections) for Christmas Day, and *Surgens Jesus* for Easter, radiate with joy. The other Christmas motets are *Gloria in excelsis* by Robert Cooper (a quietly beautiful setting) *Alma Redemptoris Mater* by Palestrina (the four-voice setting) and *Ecce Maria* by Praetorius; and the remaining ones for Easter are the well-known *O Vos omnes* and *O Crux, ave*, are by Vittoria, and a delightful rondo-like setting of *Regina caeli laetare* by Aichinger.

There is a good acoustic and the balance is excellent but the commendably steady sopranos have, above mezzo-forte, a buzzy tone that calls for a top cut. A.R.

Charpentier (1634-1704) is very much a history-book composer whose music is never played, at least in this country. Erato LDE3017 (12 in., 48s.) makes available some of his church music. On one side there is a Magnificat for double choir and orchestra (strings, flutes and organ), a big but rather dull work, quite lacking that melodic and harmonic imagination that makes Charpentier's contemporary Purcell such a tremendous figure. But the shorter pieces on the back are much more interesting. One is part of a curious and wholly unvoiced *Messe pour les Instruments*, gravely beautiful music, and this is followed by a lovely trio for unaccompanied voices. "Plorans ploravit", for contralto and continuo, is apparently influenced by

Monteverdi's famous Lament. Much the longest piece on this side is a *Salve Regina*. Some of the singing is very out of tune, but as those responsible are the "Chorale des jeunesses musicales de France", one should not, I suppose, expect professional standards. The voices at their best are fresh and attractive. The conductor is Louis-Martini with the Padeloup Orchestra.

Erato have also issued Bach's Brandenburg Concertos on two discs complete with 28-page booklet of analyses in French (no music examples); the numbers are LDE3033-4 (two 12 in., 96s.). Kurt Redel directs the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Munich, and the sleeve very sensibly gives the names of all the players. Barchet leads the violins, Redel himself plays the flute, and Hans Priegnitz is at the harpsichord, a Pleyel. The recording is excellent, the performances highly efficient; indeed the technical brilliance of the players leads them to adopt tempi that often seem to me rather too fast, notably in No. 3. In this concerto the harpsichordist extemporises a short slow movement which ends with the strings joining in with Bach's two chords. The harpsichord is sometimes balanced right out of earshot, as for instance in No. 6, in which I thought at first it was not playing in the slow movement at all, but the instrument sounds very attractive when it is given its head as in No. 5. If generally available in Britain, these discs, superior to the Vox, would be a serious rival to the Decca. The coupling, by the way, is the same; with 1, 3 and 6 on LDE3033. R.F.

The visit of the Peking State Opera to the Palace Theatre last autumn afforded one of the theatrical highlights of the year. Those who were interested in the music we heard on that occasion will be glad to know that a Peking State Opera recording is now available. This is a Chant du Monde 7-inch LP, LDY4041, and comes in the series called *Keys to China* (*Clefs pour la Chine*). The disc contains six extracts from the opera *In the Shade of the Weeping Willow*, which has been performed in Paris and which has been made into a film (it was not included in the extracts which we saw in London). The plot concerns a Chinese girl, Chu Ying-Tai, who in order to gain admittance to the University of Hang-Chow dressed up as a boy, and there fell in love with a fellow-student, Liang Chan-Po. Ying-Tai persuades Chan-Po to "marry his friend", in the person of his twin-sister, who resembles him in every respect. But alas, Ying-Tai has already been promised by her father to the son of the governor of the province. The disappointed Chan-Po dies with Ying-Tai's name on his lips. On the way to her wedding ceremony, Ying-Tai passes his tomb; a storm blows up, and she is swallowed up by the earth. As a rainbow breaks, two butterflies are seen fluttering from the tomb together.

The extracts consist first of a dialogue between Chan-Po and Ying-Tai, when he meets her for the first time in feminine garb. This is in *Sprechgesang*. There is a sung love-duet, and then the "Désolation de Chan-Po". Then a sung monologue for Ying-Tai, and a *Sprechgesang* monologue

for Chan-Po, expressing Werther-like sentiments. The selection closes with Ying-Tai's "Air des Larmes", sung on Chan-Po's tomb.

Life is short: otherwise I should be much tempted to try and learn something about this fascinating music. Chinese opera depends on dance, on mime, on perfectly controlled movements and on wonderful costumes as well as on the music, but there is enough in the music alone to interest one. The *Sprechgesang* is uncannily well-nuanced; there are some marvellous controlled glissandos, and double-glissandos, also strange noises recalling the sounds that children make when playing with model aeroplanes. Obviously, for a really accurate *Pierrot Lunaire*, we shall have to train a Chinese narrator, for difficult pitches and extreme ranges seem to present no difficulty to these voices. The singing is shrill and plangent, but not unpleasant in sound. The accompaniment, chiefly rhythmic and monodic, comes from gongs, clappers, little bells, a two-stringed fiddle and a flute.

The presentation is helpful. There are two leaflets (in French) tucked into the sleeve with the record, one a general account of Chinese music, the other a synopsis of the opera with a translation of the relevant bits of the libretto.

Less esoteric in its appeal, more readily appreciable by Western ears, is a companion disc containing folk music from Mongolia and from Sin-Kiang (LDY4039). The Mongols, we learn from the sleeve, "sont les cowboys du désert de Gobi". There is a strange, rather attractive solo on the two-stringed fiddle, and a song called *The little black horse* in which we hear two voices, a tenor and a soprano, making perfect octaves, beautifully in tune and beautifully blended, through a complicated melody—the octaves being broken only when the upper voice decorates the line with a little flutter of mordents. This side closes with a tune in several stanzas, sung by a baritone, that bears an uncanny resemblance to an English folk song!

The Sin-Kiang side opens with a catchy little number in D flat called *My flower*, piquantly sung by a soprano. Then comes a dazzling solo on an instrument that seems to be half-way between a banjo and a harp. The side closes with a rather less interesting but not unattractive dance.

A.P.

Mr. John Freestone, author of the sleeve-note on the Rococo Caruso reissue which I reviewed last month (pages 57-8), has kindly written to correct a slip in my review. I described 52440, "Vesti la giubba", as the first of Caruso's G. & T.s, instead of the first of the three recordings he made of this title (1902, 1904 and 1907). "Studenti, udite" (52378) was probably his first G. & T.: at any rate it has the earliest matrix number. The "Vesti la giubba" belongs to the November, not the March, batch of 1902 recordings. A.P.

# ROSSINI'S OPERATIC MUSIC ON RECORD

By DEREK C. KINRADE

BOTH in the opera house and on the gramophone record there has been, during recent years, a revival of interest in Rossini's music which suggests that, at last, a true valuation of his talent has been grasped. He was essentially a craftsman, concerning himself more with the construction and finish of his work than its style. For this he was content, at least until *Guillaume Tell*, to follow the conventions of his day, save, perhaps, that through his practice of writing out coloratura passages in full he somewhat limited the singers' flair for florid invention. Frequently he had very poor materials with which to work—weak librettos and thin plots—but always he contrived to give them the best possible appearance. His capacity for melodic invention, his natural genius in subtle and complex harmonics, and the sheer speed at which he was able to compose were alike remarkable, and even though his habit of reintroducing passages from his unsuccessful operas into new works has been rightly criticised, it is a fact that he employed even this artifice so skilfully that their introduction was neither noticeable nor apparently inappropriate. Who would question, I wonder, the suitability of "Ecco ridente" or "Una voce" from *Il Barbiere* if they did not know that they had already served for *Aureliano* and *Elisabetta* respectively?

So far as the gramophone is concerned a great deal is lost by the absence of the stage action, for this ingredient is probably more important in Rossini's operas than in those of any other composer. This loss is particularly felt in the new LP complete operas, but lovers of his music will none the less welcome them, and who could complain if we can thus have the opportunity of hearing such delightful items, hitherto unrecorded, as the "Nella testa ho un campanello" septet from *L'Italiana*? In the main, however, it is to the recording of operatic excerpts to which we must turn for the fullest enjoyment of Rossini's sparkling music.

The singers' prowess in florid music was undoubtedly better during the early recording period than it is to-day. Unfortunately, however, this was also the time when the Verdi-Wagner reformation was still in full swing and Rossini and his contemporaries, despite the efforts of stalwarts like Sembrich, were not much in vogue. Nevertheless there is a crop of extracts from the ever-popular *Barbiere*, *Guillaume Tell*, and one or two lesser-known works, handed down from the so-called "historical" period. Outstanding are De Lucia's well-known recordings of "Ecco ridente" and, with Huguet and Pini-Corsi, "Ah, qual colpo". His *Almaviva* has never been surpassed and it is doubtful if we shall ever hear such

flexibility in a tenor's throat again. Both versions of his "Se il mio nome", however, are really too eccentric, though less so than Smirnov's. Of the many versions of "Largo al factotum" I would single out the 1903 De Gogorza, but the modern recording by Gobbi is a superb characterisation. Particularly would I commend his attention to detail as on the triplets sung to "della città". Another commendable modern recording, from the same opera, is Corena's "A un dottor della mia sorte". In its recent 45 version this has the added virtue of coupling the otherwise unrecorded aria from *Gazza Ladra*, "Il mio piano", sung to the original score and not Zandonai's ruthlessly cut arrangement.

The 1903 Milan recordings of Guerrina Fabbri look extremely interesting for she had a full contralto voice and has left us examples of the coloratura arias from *Barbiere*, *Cenerentola*, *Semiramide*, and *L'Italiana*. However, whilst her voice is undeniably flexible there is little to suggest that she was a successful interpreter of Rossini's roles. She failed in London as *Cenerentola* and her records reveal generally poor musicianship and a style hardly suitable for portraying vivacious heroines, and certainly foreign to modern ears. Far more satisfying, I suggest, are the later

discs of Conchita Supervia, even though her singing was not without technical faults. Particularly rare in this country is her "Al capricci" from *L'Italiana* sung with the bass Scattola, but other souvenirs of her Covent Garden appearances are still not too difficult to come by, though increasingly sought after. Characteristic of these is the "Signore una parola" duet from *Cenerentola* in which she is joined by Bettoni. It is indeed unfortunate that there has not yet come forward anybody to equal, let alone surpass, Mme Supervia's exploits. Although the contemporary exponent of Rossini's mezzo-contralto roles, Giulietta Simonato, has presented them most engagingly on the stage, her defects are too considerable for her gramophonic work to be equally successful.

For those who delight in going off the beaten track I would recommend a search for Fernand Baer's black-label Zonophone of the bass air from *Le Siège de Corinth*, while the only recording of the difficult tenor aria from *Semiramide*, "Respiro! Ah dove il cimento", sung in German for Parlophone shortly before the last war by Herbert Groh, has a rarity disproportionate to its age. Readily obtainable but nevertheless unfamiliar are the Parlophone records by Alda Noni ("Ah, donate il caro spaso" from *Signor Bruschino*) and Lina Pagliughi (arias from *La Gazza Ladra*). The former is written to the familiar cavatina-cabaletta formula and is sufficiently well sung to be attractive.

Rossini's opera-seria music is well represented on the gramophone. Unfortunately there is nothing, to my knowledge, from his *Otello*, presumably because Verdi's setting had eclipsed it before the gramophone was invented. It is a pity, however, that, now we have got over the shock and there is room for both, the recording companies do not give us some of the more meritorious passages from the Rossini score which was held in very high esteem until that fateful 5th of February, 1887. Mention has already been made of *Semiramide*. Further reference, however, is necessary to the deservedly popular "Bel raggio". Fine versions of this exist by Sembrich and Tetrizzini, the latter until recently available on the H.M.V. Archive Series. "Ah, quel giorno" is perhaps less well known, but it contains a lovely slow section followed by a sparkling cabaletta, "O come da quel di", which requires considerable powers of breath control and agility from a contralto. Three versions are known to me, those by Fabbri, Stignani, and Dolukhanova, but I cannot recommend any without reservation.

At the 1935 Florence Festival the Prayer from *Mose in Egitto* roused the audience to great enthusiasm, and it is likely that Pinza's record of it will have much the same effect on its hearers.

For the presentation of Rossini's last opera, *Guillaume Tell*, the gramophone is, perhaps, for once at an advantage, for it makes possible the breaking down of a work which has suffered in the opera house because of its inordinate length. Rossini laboured on its pages to produce a masterpiece free from his normal bad habits. At

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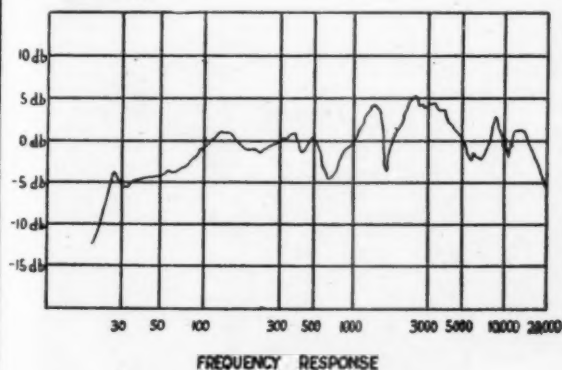


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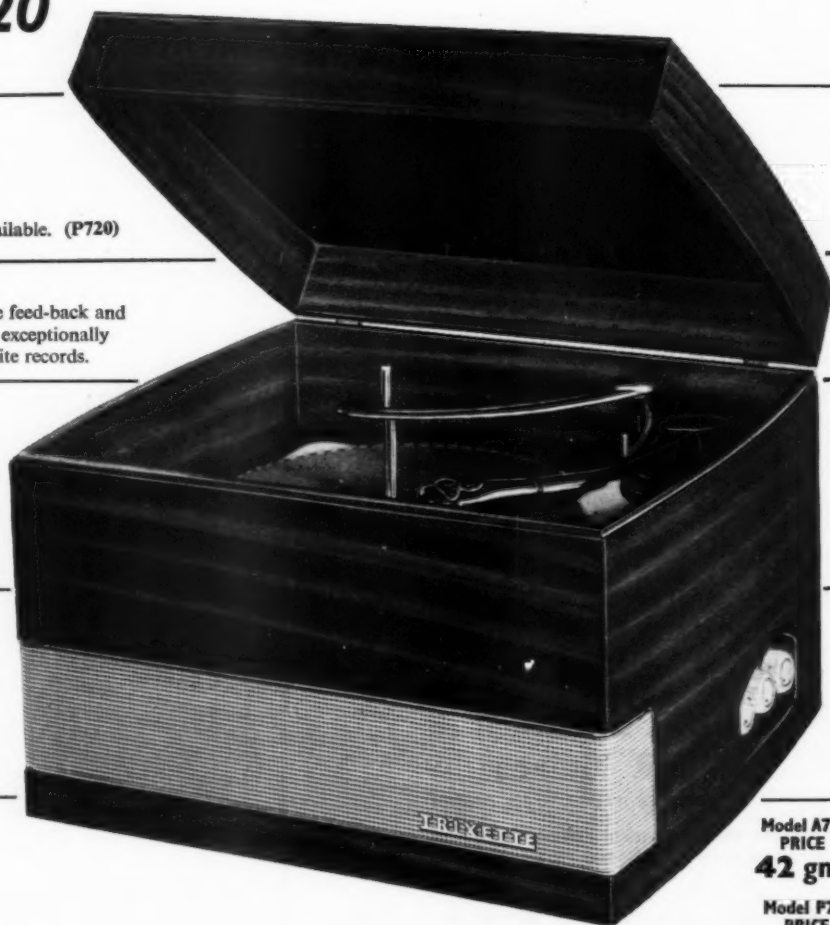
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the same time, however, his music lost much of its effervescence in the process. In 1905 Henning Malm gave us a particularly interesting rendering of the Bacarolle from the first act, "Accours dans ma racelle". More widely known are the recordings of "Ah! Mathilde" and the trio from Act 2. Those versions with Martinelli can certainly be recommended, but the claims of Escalais, Magini-Coletti, and Luppi in the latter excerpt are very considerable and there is an LP out now, of American origin, which includes this among a few other attractive items. The Cavatina, "Sombre forêt", is perhaps the loveliest thing that Rossini ever wrote—it is certainly unique. It gives the collector an opportunity to hear again the liquid tones of Claudia Muzio (I.R.C.C. 3084), while Battistini's pontifical delivery is ideally suited to the baritone air "Sois immobile". The principle joy for the

tenor is the lovely "Asile héréditaire". Here again Martinelli shines, but I have a personal preference for the Tamagno G. & T. which is a revelation of the delicacy of tone which this trumpet-toned tenor could achieve.

We can only wonder what Rossini would have made of the *Faust* libretto for in 1829 he laid down his pen so far as opera was concerned. But he left us a great heritage of music varying from the pot-boiler to the masterpiece and much of it is still untapped by the gramophone companies. There is some excuse for the absence of *Otello* excerpts from the catalogues but there is none, save ignorance, for the similar non-appearance of anything from *Le Comte Ory*, perhaps the gayest yet most mature opera Rossini ever wrote. I hope that I, at least, have been able to make possible a keener appreciation of what is available to us, however difficult to find.

## STEREOSONIC TAPE RECORDS

By ROGER FISKE

I MISSED the first public demonstration of stereosonic tapes at the National Radio and Television Exhibition last August, nor did I hear the more recent demonstration in The Royal Festival Hall which P. Wilson described in the June issue of THE GRAMOPHONE. Very much of a beginner, I went recently to Hayes to hear some of these tapes on the Gramophone Company's equipment. Two consoles each with a loudspeaker were in the two corners at one end of the room. I sat in the middle at the opposite end, a privileged one-man audience like King Ludwig of Bavaria. Anyone sitting not quite in the middle, not quite equidistant from the two speakers, would get reasonable reception, but not quite as good as I was getting. And what I was getting did not seem like a substitute for the real thing. It was the real thing. Shut your eyes and there was Cherubino, just flushed from his arm-chair by the Count, left centre, with Susanna right centre and Basilio sniggering farther right still. The characters seem to move from side to side, peopling the blank wall between the two speakers; aurally the illusion is complete, with the orchestra too coming at one on a broad front, the violins left, 'cellos right, woodwind and brass centre. Or is the illusion complete? Is there still room for improvement? Do those horns in the middle seem superimposed on Figaro standing in the middle of the stage, instead of coming from somewhere underneath him? One is not sure as yet. Anyway this is immeasurably better than anything one has heard before.

So far H.M.V. and Columbia have issued two batches of such recordings, one last autumn and the other last May; more are promised for September. A surprising number have been sold already, surprising for the equipment is inevitably very expensive. The Gramophone Company have

such faith in the idea that for some months at most of their sessions they have been recording for the stereosonic audience of the future at the same time as for the LP audience of to-day. For normal stereosonic recording a pair of velocity microphones are used, placed very close together and usually one above the other. One faces left and the other right of centre, their axes of maximum response perpendicular to one another. This microphone system thus views the orchestra from one position, but each microphone produces from the same performance a different aspect of the sound field and these are recorded on to the same tape, the two tracks laid side by side. For reproduction two similar loudspeakers are used and each reproduces one of the tracks on the tape. My listening was carried out on the H.M.V. Stereosonic Model 3034 in which the loudspeakers are housed in two consoles, but any good type of corner speaker will do, and eventually it will be possible to buy a playing-desk on its own so that people can use their favourite type of speaker.

With orchestral and chamber music, a work can be recorded for stereosonic tape and for LPs at the same time, but operatic music needs special treatment. When *The Marriage of Figaro* was recorded at Abbey Road, the space available for the singers was marked out with chalk by the Glyndebourne producer, and the singers moved around just as they were used to moving on the stage at Glyndebourne. A lot of singers standing still in one line would on this apparatus sound like a lot of singers standing still in one line. Cherubino must really jump out of the window. In ensembles such as those in the finale of Act 2 in *Figaro* one can choose which singer to concentrate on, just as one can in the opera house; the ear has freedom to select to an incomparably greater extent than when listening to a disc. I heard a demonstration recording

of two groups of people talking at the same time, and I could follow whichever conversation I chose as indeed one can in a tube or in a public house. On a single track tape or disc this would not be possible. The increase in clarity when more than one person is singing is astonishing.

The Glyndebourne *Figaro* is of course available on LPs, but about half the stereosonic recordings now available are so far for that medium only. Apart from three discs of "popular" numbers, there are "unique" recordings of a Bach Cantata (Jacques), Schubert's Sixth Symphony (Beecham and the R.P.O.), Dvořák's Symphonic Variations (Sargent and the Philharmonia), Tchaikovsky's *The Tempest* (Matacic and the Philharmonia) and Britten's Piano Concerto, which I shall come to in a moment. The choice of music is curiously adventurous. It seems to presuppose that the type of man who buys this equipment prefers out-of-the-way music to more obvious fare. Prices at the moment are high: two to three guineas for a tape playing for up to thirty minutes. This is about three times the price of music on a LP. I inquired how dance music would fare if deprived of multi-mic technique, and was told that ordinary microphones can be used in conjunction with the dual stereosonic one. For instance a crooner can be placed to the right of the conductor and his or her microphone fed into that side of the tape that will eventually emerge from the right-hand loudspeaker. But one of the glories of the new system is that it makes multi-mic technique a thing of the past where serious music is concerned. The dual microphone can be placed surprisingly far back and still achieve both definition and reverberation. This greater distance from the sound source itself increases the realism of the resulting sound, for few of us are used to sitting in the front row. It also means that the players must achieve internal balance and not rely, as so often in the past, on the unfortunate technician to see them through. A further important advantage of the stereosonic system is that one gets an impression of a greater dynamic range. The sound can build up to a fortissimo without loss of clarity and without giving irritation due to an unduly high physical sound level.

At first one listens to the device without thinking much about the individual recording, but, after hearing extracts from Prokofiev and Sibelius symphonies, by the time we got to the Britten concerto I was beginning to lose the awed gape of an Eskimo confronted with the Albert Memorial and to appreciate its particular merits and defects. Let me attempt very briefly what I think must be the first review of a stereosonic recording, at any rate in this country, and the Britten is a good work to begin on for it has never been recorded before. It was written just before the war, but the slow movement, a grave and beautiful passacaglia, dates from about 1946. It is a pity that while he was about it Britten did not also replace the second movement, a rather thin waltz; the rest of the work makes excellent listening. The pianist is a dexterous young American called Jacques

Abram and he is accompanied by Herbert Menges and the Philharmonia Orchestra. So far as I could judge, for I do not know this work, the performance is very spirited and efficient. Certainly the quality of the piano tone is quite wonderful. But as I listened I became aware of small teething troubles in this new recording method. I heard these tapes at the full frequency range, up to 12,000 cycles, and under these circumstances a slight background noise was audible. However, this no doubt will be overcome in time. The piano had clearly been placed to the left of the conductor, but it had a disconcerting way of not staying put. When the pianist was at the top end of the keyboard he was well to the left, but a scurry down from treble to bass and one could almost see the instrument sliding along the platform and finishing dead centre. I had the impression that other instruments sometimes stray as well, though not to the same extent. Trumpets and trombones seemed to be in one place when playing loud but to have shuffled sideways slightly for the softer ones. Or

did I just move my position? I had not noticed any straying in the symphonies I heard. One needs to live with this thing for longer than one afternoon before being sure of anything.

Except that I am quite sure that from now on I would like to hear all recordings stereophonically. Presumably the more people who buy the apparatus the cheaper it will become, so all we really need is for a few thousand millionaires to send in their orders so that the rest of us can have a chance. I was glad to hear that even at this early stage international agreement has been reached on recording and replay characteristics, the positioning of the reproducing heads and the speed and dimensions of the actual tape. This will of course be of the greatest importance when other countries start marketing stereosonic tapes. It is hard to conceive of there ever being an improved method of recording sound. When the thing really starts getting into people's homes all we shall then need is coloured stereosonic vision to go with it.

R.F.

## NIGHTS AT THE ROUND TABLE

By W. A. CHISLETT

Barbieri's *Jugar con Fuego* is one of the most important and significant of the Spanish zarzuelas (Lond. Int. TW91139). Francisco Asenjo Barbieri was born in Madrid in 1823. He lived at the Teatro de la Cruz of which his maternal grandfather was caretaker. This theatre was mainly given over to Italian opera which had a great fascination for Barbieri in his teens. His family were not in favour of a musical career for him but despite this he made such progress that at the age of 14 he was ready to enter the Royal Conservatory at Madrid. About 3 years later his father was killed in the civil war, his mother remarried and he was thrown upon his own resources.

This may well have been a blessing in disguise for in the rough and tumble of earning a living he twice, at least, had to undertake a long journey back to Madrid on foot when touring Italian opera companies with which he was working failed, and he seems to have earned his keep on the way by playing his bandurria and singing. Probably it was these and similar experiences that first gave rise to the thought of reviving the popular Spanish opera of the eighteenth century in place of the alien product imported from Italy. His first zarzuela was *Gloria y peluca*. It was produced with considerable success in 1850 and *Jugar con Fuego* which followed in 1851 sealed his reputation. Although he composed as many as 77 zarzuelas he found time also to promote many concerts and do a great deal of conducting, to undertake considerable musical research and to act as Professor of Harmony and Musical History at the Madrid Conservatory.

*La Dogaresa* by Millán, the scene of which is set in Venice although the music is little if any more Italianate than, say, our own *Gondoliers* (TW91129) and *Molinos de Viento* by Luna (TW91036) are thoroughly enjoyable in their lighthearted way but *Jugar con Fuego* stands supreme. In all cases the casts are the now familiar ones under the direction of **Ataulfo Argenta** and the outstanding singer is **Pilar Lorengar**.

**Amelia Rodrigues** on Col. 33CS14 gives us a side each from Portugal and Spain in *Fado and Flamenco*. Of the four fados Coimbra, known in England as "April in Portugal" and of which she sings one verse in English, is the best known but I prefer both *Una Casa Portuguesa*, which tells of Portuguese hospitality, and *Lisbon Nao Sejas Francesa*, which refers to the Napoleonic defeat of Portugal in 1801 and expresses the hope that the girls won't fall for the invaders. The flamencos on the reverse are in some cases almost as fast as patter-songs, and very effective they are although I would not like to vouch for the authenticity of all of them. Particularly do I like *No Me Tires Indire* which may be freely translated "Don't say one thing when you mean something else", and *Lerlele*, which is sub-titled "Zambra del Sacro-Monte", a dance of Moorish origin.

The very attractive **Sari Barabas** leads a good team of soloists, with chorus and orchestra, in two Columbia selections from operettas. These are from the International list but even so it seems odd to me to print the titles, etc., on the pictorial side of the sleeves in English and most of the details on the reverse in German. And while on this subject it is a pity that in their zarzuela records Decca seems to have abandoned the practice of including in the sleeve a card giving an English translation of the notes which are printed in Spanish on the outside. One of the Columbia selections is called *Favourite Melodies of Oscar Straus and Robert Stolz* (33CS16) and the other, which is entitled *Operette-Operette* features the music of Paul Abraham on one side and Nico Dostal on the other (33CS9). The melodies selected include, as usual, both established favourites and comparatively unfamiliar songs. These are both good examples of their kind but I have heard better and the recording is a shade muddy or muffled. Of the two the former is to be preferred both for its better singing and better recording of the orchestra which in the latter tends to sound plummy. One thing they have in common is the verve with which they are put over.

A record which arouses my fullest enthusiasm both for the beauty of the music and the fine integrity of the singing is *Welsh Songs, Vol. II*. The singer is **Thomas L. Thomas**, the harpist **Enid Simon** and the pianist in the two songs which have piano accompaniments is **Jacob Hanneman** (Decca LW5222). There are eight songs and with the records is given a card containing the words in both Welsh and English. All moods are expressed. *Bugelio'r Gwenith Gwyn* is the plea of a lover, *Llwyn On* a love tragedy, *Morfa Rhuddlan* is almost inexpressibly sad, *Cyfrir Geifr* a lively Caernarvonshire counting song, *Ar Hyd Y Nos* is the supremely beautiful "All Through The Night" and sounds even lovelier in Welsh than it does in English (I have said before, but it bears repeating, what a grand singing language is Welsh), *I Deryn Pur* is another love song, *Suo-Gan* is a sweet little lullaby in a five-note scale, and *Clychau Aberdyfi* is a version of "The Bells of Aberdovey" in which the bells are counted up to six and seven instead of the older five. The songs are all of the 18th and 19th centuries. A very beautiful record, recommended to all lovers of good songs and fine singing. It is most emphatically not merely of Welsh interest.

A ten-inch 78 orchestral record is a rarity these days but Parlophone offer one, I quote the label, of *Intermezzo Sinfonico* aus "Canalleria rusticana" and *Intermezzo* aus "Der Bajazzo" (DPW91). "Der Bajazzo" is, of course, Cav's stable companion Pag. And a very good record it is both in playing, by the **Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie** under **Schuchter** and in recording the volume level of which is very high, particularly when the organ adds its full weight to the orchestra in the former, but with no trace of hardness or harshness.

*Men of Brass No. 1* is the title of Decca LF1262 on which the **Massed Brass Bands of Fodens, Fairey Aviation and Morris Motors** under **Harry Mortimer** are heard in a mixed programme. Starting with *Yorke's Fanfare* which leads in to the Grand March from Gounod's *Queen of Sheba* (very "Aida-like" in places) then follow in turn *Spanish Gipsy Dance*, *Buglers' Holiday*, *The Mill in the Dale*, *Cornet Carillon*, *Madelon* and *Nightfall in Camp*. This is magnificent playing and excellent recording in a hall with rather a long reverberation period which fortunately does not mess things up. I first played this record under ideal conditions. On one of the few really warm evenings (I hope for more before this appears in print for I shall be having a short holiday) I opened the french window in the room in which I do most of my listening and heard it from outside. The obvious merit of the massing of 75 or so of our best brass players is the great solidity and weight of tone, but listen to the suavity of the cornets in the more lyrical passages and their superb tonguing in the trio and elsewhere, and listen, too, to the inner parts, the flugels, tenor horns, and so on. The only doubt I have about the playing is in *Madelon* which calls for brilliance and this might well have been better achieved with a band half the size, and of the recording my only serious criticism is the reticence of some of the smaller members of the kitchen department, particularly the triangle and the castanets on the first side, the latter of which recalled to my mind another example of their not very successful recording many years ago when Sir Compton Mackenzie said that they sounded like someone wielding a toothpick.

A series of traditional *National Dances* are recorded under the auspices of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing on two H.M.V. records. They are played by **Raymond Holder** on the piano, joined in some of them by **Roy Upton Holder** (clarinet). The countries represented are Yugoslavia, Greece, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia (B10952) and Sweden, Brittany and Italy (B10953). Some

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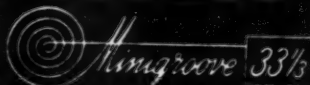
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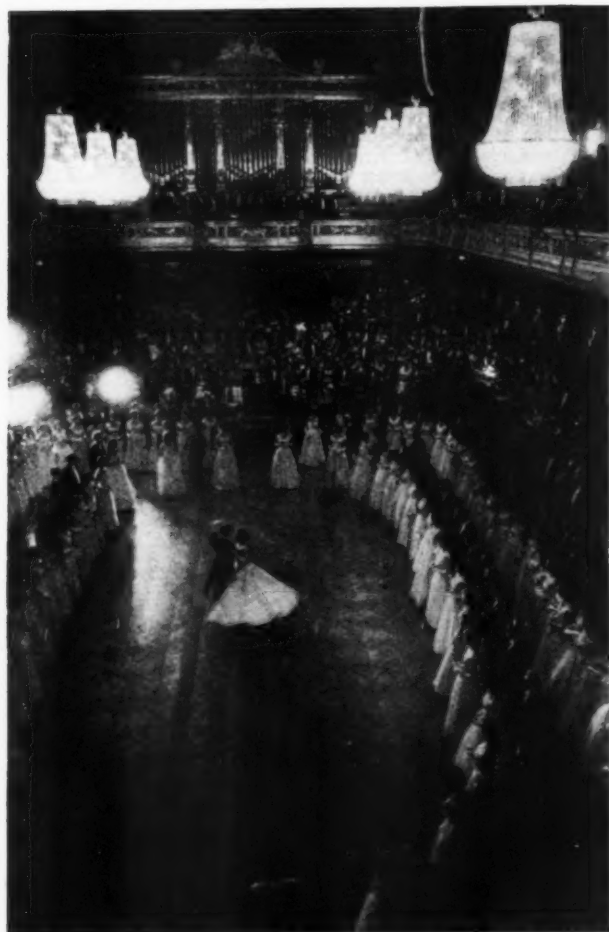
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are fast and some are slow, the Swiss Moleson is very "yodellish" in style and the Italian Tarantella leaves us in no doubt as to where Rossini got his inspiration from for "La Danza". Many of the dances are unfamiliar to me but those who wish to learn more of them might well get the appropriate volumes in the little series of "Handbooks of European National Dances" which Max Parrish published in the years immediately after the war.

Of much more general interest for listeners as distinct from dancers is a 45EP "Traditional Songs of Jamaica" sung by **Lilli-Verona** to a rhythm accompaniment which varies from song to song and is never obtrusive (H.M.V. 7EGC1). This is the most attractive record of its kind I have heard for a long time. The singer has a natural and very pleasant voice, the peasant patois of Jamaica is colourful and the songs are authentic and set to tuneful and expressive melodies. There are a couple of worksongs, a hammer song and a digging song, two with a religious strain of sorts, several are tinged with a lively humour, and *Sammy dead* is a gently sad little ditty.

What a vintage month this is for I now find a new record by our very old friend **Richard Hayward**, the prince of traditional singers of Northern Ireland, who sings four "Orange and Blue" songs of the "coat trailing" variety—the sort of songs that if sung in some quarters would provoke a riot at once. And how good they are, and how perfectly he sings them. They are *The Sash My Father Wore*, *The Protestant Boys*, *The Battle of Garvagh* and *The Aghalee Heroes* (Beltona IEP37).

My last two records are a bit of an anticlimax. On Decca F10744 **Kenneth McKellar** sings *Cameron Lad* and *Bonnie Strathearn*, two conventional and sentimental Scottish songs, and H.M.V. DA2085 is taken from the sound track of the film "Serenade" and contains two of its principal numbers, *Serenade* and *Destiny*, sung, almost crooned indeed, by **Mario Lanza**.

A parcel of last-minute arrivals almost constitutes a miniature tour round the world. Starting in Vienna, and where better is there to start? **Wal-Berg and his Orchestra** give us 14 separately banded items collectively called *Dreams of Vienna* on Felsted PDL85015. They range from Strauss waltzes, with a polka and march, to three of Kreisler's attractive morsels, music by Kálmán and Robert Stolz and the *Harry Lime Theme*. The waltzes are truncated with somewhat abrupt results at times, orchestrations are glossed up and rhythms varied waywardly, of none of which do I wholly approve. The acoustics of the building in which the recording was done are such as to cause some detail to be lost.

Much better do I like Vanguard's *Waltzes, Polkas, Marches and Czardas* by the **Vienna State Opera Orchestra** under **Anton Paulik** (PVL7021), particularly as in addition to the well-known *Artist's Life*, *Wine*, *Women and Song* and *Morning Papers* it includes the lovely *Aquarellen Waltz* and the lively *Jockey Polka* by the comparatively neglected Josef and the unfamiliar *Czardas* from "Ritter Pazmann" and *Frisch ins Feld March* by brother Johann. Playing is a fine blend of crispness and savvy and the recording is first-rate.

Still in Vienna is a Philips record of excerpts from two of Lehar's operettas—*Paganini* and *The Land of Smiles*, the latter of which takes us a long journey Eastwards, for its scenes if not its music (NBR6036). **Walter Anton Dotzer** is not a Richard Tauber but sings very pleasantly and is well supported by the rest of the cast and the chorus and orchestra under **Heinz Sandauer**. I note by the way that Herr Dotzer was a pupil of Alfred Piccaver, the great tenor that England lost to Vienna but who is now teaching in London.

Across the Pacific to America for a group of

*Spirituals* sung by **The Mariners** on London HA-A2007. If you want these songs in the simplest form this is not the record to choose, but for modern sophistication I do not know its equal. Some of the 16 songs are sung unaccompanied but in the faster ones, and it is here that the Mariners excel, there is a compelling rhythm accompaniment. An excellent team of singers whose articulation is a particular delight and a very fine recording.

Homeward bound we call at the Canary Islands. *Canciones de Gran Canaria* is quite fascinating even though I can only guess at much of the meaning of the eight songs, for there is no sleeve-note with my copy and there is no time for research (London Int. WB91141). **Maria Merida** is the soloist and the accompaniment, directed by **Leocadio R. Machado**, is by an orchestra composed largely of plucked instruments and thin-toned members of the fiddle family. Some of the songs, most of which are traditional, are slow and languorous and others are fast and exciting and although the Spanish influence is paramount it is not absolute.

We return to the mainland of Europe, most appropriately, via Spain, with Brunswick's *Castles of Spain* (LAT8107). A mixed bag if ever there was one. The **Orquesta Zarzuela de Madrid**, conducted by **Torróba**, incor-

porates a number of unusual instruments as necessary to give the appropriate colour. Among the composers whose music is included are Albéniz (in an arrangement by the conductor), Turina, Larregia, Bretón, Guiridi, Fernandez, Gombeau, Chueca and Valverde. Not great music, it doesn't pretend to be, but vastly interesting and played with brio and verve.

Whether General Franco would approve or not, our journey ends at the International Folk Song Contest held in Warsaw in 1955 with *Festival of Folksong* (Topic T2). Here are eight of the prize-winners and the record was made at the Festival itself; usually the applause is cut off but not always, and in the case of *O my Kibuz*, sung by the winner, Asek Dzumbayev (U.S.S.R.), the audience's chuckles of appreciation give added interest to a song whose words I do not understand, but the kobuz is a long-necked lute and the singer is supposed to have taken his with him on being called up to the Army and to have assured his officers that it has a sharp point, fierce teeth and a long reach. Of the other items I find an authentic song—*Baul*—from India the most interesting if not the most tuneful by European standards. This is an 8-inch 33 disc available from the W.M.A., 17 Bishops Bridge Road, London, W.2 (price 16s.).

## MISCELLANEOUS AND DANCE By "HARLEQUIN"

45 r.p.m. numbers are given where applicable for E.M.I. Group titles, whilst an asterisk indicates availability at 45 r.p.m. on the Decca Group labels. 45 r.p.m. numbers for the latter Group and Capitol are the same as the 78 r.p.m. numbers with the addition of the prefix "45".

When Marie Lloyd died 100,000 Londoners tried to attend her funeral and the bars of Leicester Square were draped in black. **Don Shirley** is a very great pianist. From the juxtaposition of two such disparate statements of fact and opinion can we distil the month's lesson? Those readers who have been listening to the B.B.C. series "The Boy in the Gallery" may well have wondered what all the fuss was about. The bulk of these old music-hall songs were no less corny than those of to-day, many of them were by no means "drawing room", and there was little finesse in putting them over. And yet! In his quiet way Colin MacInnes, who is responsible for this series and whose presentation is masterly, shows how so many of the songs reflected the social scene and the "thought processes" of the time, as well as something of the genius displayed by the artists in projecting a definite personality. Of course there was vulgarity and sentiment by the bucket, but we are a vulgar and sentimental people. To-day the halls are shut, the ubiquitous microphone has destroyed personality and popular entertainment has become an industry producing a mass-produced article. If the vulgarity remains, we have substituted a leer for a guffaw. I would ask those readers who are fortunate enough to live in a town where there is still a theatre open: When did you last laugh out loud? Or again: When did you last shed the *furtiva lagrima*? "The boy I love sits up in the gallery" sang Marie Lloyd. It is this sentiment that Mr. MacInnes has been evoking, and it was a stroke of genius to use this lovely tune as a frame for these nostalgic pictures. If Mr. MacInnes wakes up in the night to ask "Who's that knocking at my door",

you can bet your life it won't be a recording impresario. As Mr. Crosby tells us in the film of "Anything Goes" *Ya gotta give the people hoke*. If I am asked what this little homily has to do with the month's records, I would plead that the world of entertainment is one and indivisible and that the "masthead" of THE GRAMOPHONE carries the words "incorporating Vox, The Broadcast Critic and Radio Review", and incidentally those readers who still possess a complete set of Vox could spend a profitable half hour looking over its pages. Maybe one day somebody will do the same for I.T.A. Even a commercial *Listener* might be fun!

No artists to-day? Meet **Don Shirley**, one of the world's great pianists. I may be wrong, but I do assure you that those words are carefully chosen. When Mr. Shirley's first record was issued some months back I devoted much space to him, and I shall do so again because I want as many people as possible to hear this man. He is doing something which Bach did for its own sake and which Mozart did to bolster his reputation, and which has not been seriously attempted since Liszt devised his great *partitions de piano*. When a great artist first hits the public the effect is so shattering that we are tempted to underrate his second and subsequent appearances. But there is plenty of interest on London HAA2004. Again, this has come for review without a sleeve, and London seem to be curiously shy in publicising this artist. So I can still tell you nothing about him other than from the evidence of his playing. My erudite friends who write learnedly about jazz and pops in our contemporaries and whom I read carefully if only to be sure of the sex of some of our performers, seem to find it difficult to classify Shirley. Of course he is not simply a jazz pianist, nor can he be neatly labelled and given a couple of lines in the specialist categories of the reviews. Here indeed is the classic justification for our own dear old "Miscellaneous" title! These are improvisations. Are they written down? Perhaps, but they are

obviously rehearsed to the *nth* degree. If there is nothing so tremendous here as his previous skyscraper of pianism built out of the slender material of *How High the Moon*, his present centre-piece, based on *The Man I Love*, is no less interesting. Other tunes of Gershwin are woven into the fabric, and if there is a little too much up-and-down plucked bass, Shirley keeps the music moving steadily to the last statement of his main theme. We start with a curious mixture of *Poissons d'or* and *Jeu d'eau*—in point of mere fact *I Cover the Water Front*, and then find ourselves listening to a fugue *No Two People*—almost a play on words here! Next a direct quotation from Schubert's Op. 142, No. 2 *Impromptu* introduces *Secret Love*. Schubert's piano sonatas may or may not be intended here, though the plentiful modulations may be a pointer. The pianist's trill at the end of this is perfectly executed. After the colossal structure erected on *The Man I Love*, he plays the same composer's *Love is Here to Stay* with the utmost simplicity. A chorale? Let us say simply a *Nachtstück*, as soothing as that by Schumann and losing not a semiquaver by comparison. *Dancing on the Ceiling*—Schumann again, but crossed with Liszt, who did set some of Schumann's songs, and whose *D Flat Study* will be evoked. After a quick *You Can't Take that Away from Me*, with its little fanfares, there is a perfectly enchanting lullaby under the title *Answer Me*. A medley based on the music of the revue "New Faces" begins with some old-fashioned syncopation and almost turns *I'm in Love with Miss Logan* into a passacaglia, and the record ends surprisingly with *My Funny Valentine* with passages for bowed bass. All this could so easily be pretentious, but I contend that it is magnificently creative, musically and interesting. If it is also exciting, Mr. Shirley understands the purpose of repose. In short, I am sufficiently presumptuous to tell London that they have a supreme artist on their books, even if they do not know it.

I said last month that the mounting output would preclude mention of every LP and EP record. This month for the first time there are more LP than 78 discs—39 of them! Altogether we are faced with a total of 221 records, and I mean records and not sides! So let us go in at the deep end and take it from there. First, then, three very different records that I enjoyed. "Coast Concert" is a collection of jazz classics played by **Bobby Hackett** and his Jazz Band. There is nothing very advanced here, but it is all good fun, and there is a vocal by **Jack Teagarden** for collectors. *Royal Garden Blues* and *That's a Plenty* are included (Capitol LC6824). "Lullaby of Broadway" covers a number of tunes by Dubin and Warren, nicely arranged and played by **Woelf Phillips** on Decca LK4137. As well as the title tune, we have *Would You Like to Take a Walk* ingeniously using a xylophone, and *Forty-Second Street*. Mr. Phillips used to run the Skyrockets and the pit at the Palladium, subsequently wagging a stick at the Pigalle. Though no stranger to recording studios this is his first venture at this kind of selection. An auspicious start. Then from H.M.V. (DLPC10) **George Melachrino** conducts what is called "The Orchestra of the 6th San Remo Festival". Of the ten numbers, three are marked as prize winners. The music is innocuous, but the playing and recording are so polished that even those who find no pleasure in Continental light music should enjoy the record. As an encore to the Phillips selection, **The Jumping Jacks** have recorded the same composer's *About a Quarter to Nine* with whistling on Capitol CL14597,\* backed by *Lady Play Your Mandoline*, which was written by that interesting pianist Oscar Levant.

Our attention is drawn to two films. "The Eddy Duchin Story" succeeds "The Benny Goodman Story", but in truth it is difficult

to see a similar flood of records. Philips are being clever with these films. While others busy themselves with soundtrack recordings which so often sound execrable and whose artists are but a pale shadow of the original, this Company rustles round and assembles original recordings. They did this last month for Lilian Roth, and now on BBL7081 we have a number of records made by **Eddy Duchin**. I do not know what staying power this artist has in England (I find I have disposed of my own Duchin records), but the sleeve can be safely quoted—"tasteful and charming". That just about sums up the record, and believe me that is saying a good deal these days. His use of the Chopin E Flat Nocturne as a signature tune may not be regarded as the acme of taste, but somehow it is all in keeping with Mr. Duchin's muse. Duchin, who died in 1951, is replaced at the piano by **Carmen Cavallaro** for the sound track recording on Bruns. LAT 8119. We know Mr. Cavallaro as an estimable pianist, and indeed he plays delightfully here in such numbers as *Shine on Harvest Moon* and *Whispering*, but when the screen (scream?) orchestra comes crashing in on *Dizzy Fingers* and elsewhere it all becomes a bit overpowering and, judging from Duchin's own performances, extremely untypical. Unfortunately it is just these numbers that appear on 45's (05576/7)\* where the recording sounds shocking and where *Chopsticks* unaccountably includes a hefty chunk of the Second Hungarian Rhapsody.

#### THE MONTH'S CHOICE

**Don Shirley.**  
**Eddy Duchin.**  
**Bob Crosby.**  
**Bobby Hackett.**  
**Nellie Lutchter.**  
**Dean Martin.**

London HAA2004.  
Philips BBL7081.  
Brun. OE9029.  
Capitol LC6824.  
Philips BBE12045.  
Capitol EAP1022.

Curiously *Dizzy Fingers*, Zex Confrey's stable companion to *Kitten on the Keys*, turns up again this month. This kind of number must be played with finesse, but **Ken Mackintosh** gives it the works on H.M.V. POP225/jM417. This is clever in its hard hitting way, but **Joe Carr** plays another Confrey favourite, *Stumbling*, with suitable aplomb (Capitol CL14587\*). The Mackintosh record brings back an old-timer in Montague Ewing's *The Policeman's Holiday*, an entertaining frolic, which really belongs to the pit band in the interval. The other big film is "Anything Goes". This is a big disappointment and is typical of what happens when the film moguls attempt to bring a period piece up to date. We get off to a brilliant start with **Bing Crosby** and **Donald O'Connor** in *Ya Gotta Give the People Hoke*, an excellent point number. "Every year at the Met, they get deeper in debt, it's really time they awoke, they don't want *Pagliacci*, give them *Liberace*, that would be a masterful stroke". **Mitzi Gaynor** sings the title song. This has been cleaned up and a new verse substituted for those references to Colney Hatch and "nudist parties in studios". No harm in this, but it is about now that you begin to worry about the orchestra, and Great Scott you are right. Miss Gaynor takes the monotony out of that long-winded song *I Get a Kick Out of You* by means of some gentle caricature, but she is given no chance by the band. *You're the Top* is fool-proof, but then comes one of those dreadful ballets, *bas-ti*, believe it or not, on *Let's Do It* (surely even the one-and-nineties could take these words) and *All Through the Night*. So the dismal story goes on. If the film is like this and you want the record then here it is, and in any case you might like it for the otherwise unrecorded opening number (Brun. LAT8118). This is quite a Crosby month, for Bing has two LP's, being Vols. 1 and

2 of "The Early 30's". Here are collected many famous songs which helped to establish the name. They sound like the originals, the accompaniments are various and there is some whistling (Brun. LA8740/1). Then **Gary Crosby** joins with **Louis Armstrong** in an entertaining *Lazybones*, coupled with *Easy Street* on 05574\*, while to complete the family portrait there is an EP from **Bob Crosby** with *Bobcats* on OE9029. This includes *Nick La Rocca's Fidgety Feet*, and is notable for a wonderful *Big Foot Jump*, with presumably **Bob Zurke** at the piano. A British film that has been around is "It's great to be young", from which a short selection is recorded by **Ray Martin** with **The Coronets** on Columbia SEG7639. This is simple entertainment competently done.

There is little from the theatre. However, M.G.M. have an EP, labelled No. 1, from "The Threepenny Opera". In May my colleague W. A. Ghislett reviewed the Telefunken LP, which was from the original production. This current record is of the American version with the Broadway cast. It is a snip for those who want an inexpensive disc from the show. On checking Weill's entry in WERM I was delighted to find a selection listed by the Tokio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Viscount Konoye, who I believe was a brother of the Japanese Prime Minister before the war and who recorded a number of classical works issued here on the old Decca-Polydor label. This record carries a sleeve note by Peter Buchanan followed by the credit "Sunday Express". Odd (EP559). There is also a completely unrepresentative number from the brilliant revue "For Amusement Only". *Teenage Love* is sung by **The Shepherd Boys** on Col. DB3793/SCM5282, coupled with *Little Girls and Little Boys* (a kind of "what are they made of" number).

There is another outbreak of Rhythm and Blues/Rock and Roll jitters. I only mention it here because although the police will have an uncomfortable week during the forthcoming visit of Elvis Presley, we can spare ourselves the spectacle by guying the whole beastly business with the aid of **Gale Warning** (alias **Frances Day**) and the Weather Men in *Met Rock* on Nixa N15061. This is really quite funny with its chanting of "Shannon, Cromarty, Dover, Dogger, Humber, Rockall, Faroes, Lundy" etc. If you have ever turned the radio on too soon to catch a cricket score and got landed with this dreary recital you will appreciate this nonsense, particularly the deadpan interjection "Deep depression Heligoland". Reverse takes off *Heartbreak Hotel*, which **The Goofers** turn into *Tear Drop Motel* on Vogue Q72171\*. One hesitates to recommend funny records, but here are two to note, one English and one very American. **The Goons** have arrived on disc. *The Bluebottle Blues* has the assistance of the **Orchestra Fromage**, and on the other side, but only just, as there is a wonderful false start on the first side, is *I'm Walking Backwards for Christmas* (Decca F10756\*). "It's in the Book" brings **Johnny Standley** in some singing commercials and an exposition of *Little Bo-Peep*. This is very laboured but may raise a smile (Capitol EAP1020).

Another natural pair is provided by **Thunderclap Jones** and **Brother Bones** respectively on Oriole CB1328 and 1030. Mr. Jones, the wild Welshman currently playing Chelsea, is quite a pianist as is evident in *Sound Barrier Boogie*, while Mr. Bones exudes charm in *Sweet Georgia Brown*, sounding rather like an early Mills Brother. Commercialised religion is still with us (*The Saturday Evening Post* had a long article on this the other day) but **Roberta Sherwood** is something terrific in *Rosetta Thorpe's This Train* on Bruns. 05572\*. I do not wish to introduce an

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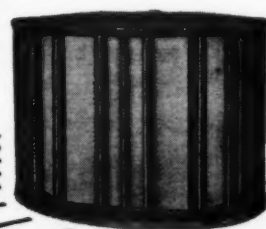
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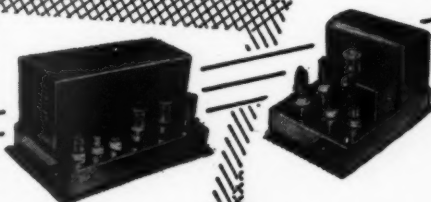
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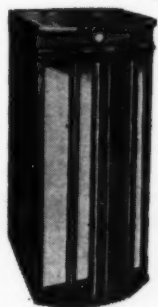
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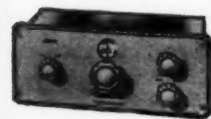
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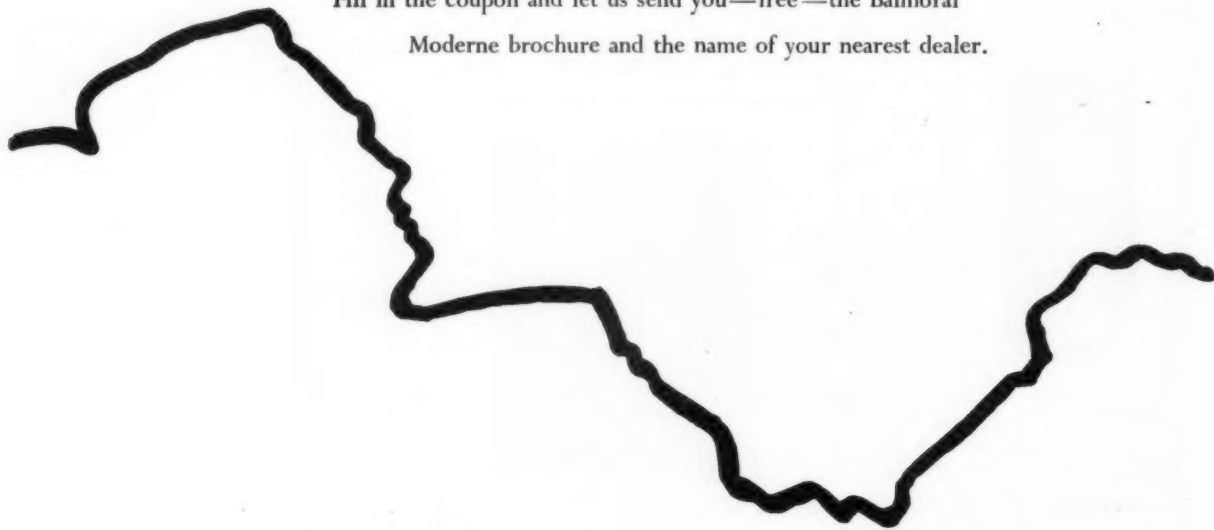
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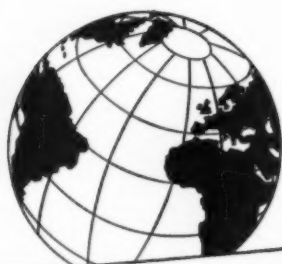
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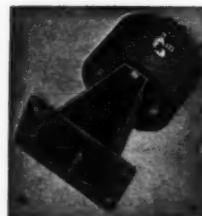
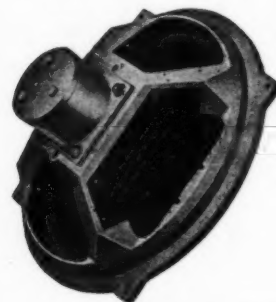


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apartheid note here, but the mixing of cultures can have some distressing results, and I still say that negro spirituals sung in evening dress in a night club are an abomination. Miss Sherwood is here a natural and should cause offence to no one. On the other hand the Misses Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald have been enjoying rave notices for spoiling some quite decent songs for a long time. There are 12 LP inches of each on Philips BBL7082 (a good accompaniment, but unnamed) and Bruns. LAT8115, which is nothing but an orgy of scat singing, and which includes an organ and a version of *Lady be Good*, which is as out of character as the white **Julie London's** 'Wonderful' in her LP on London HAU2005. There can even be crimes against teeny-weeny art, and Gershwin's melodies were a bit more than that. The accompanying blurb for Miss London is worth quoting: "This lithe and talented singing goddess . . . Julie is a beautiful and yet unassuming young woman who has flaxen hair, and eyes as blue as South Sea lagoons; she has enough sex appeal to stampede a Rotary luncheon; her figure alone could revive the imagination of a dying hermit". Some part of this figure is exposed on the cover, on which Miss London looks out on "her devotees and fans, all determined to drink in every word being breathed by their idol" with an expression of blank amazement—known in the trade as sultry. Well, well, Cleopatra, Helen et al. will have to cut either a groove or a caper. One Christmas we shall really have to have a party and send out the records to the wrong reviewers! **Eartha Kitt** turns up with *Je cherche un homme* (rhyming with Tom) and *Honolulu Rock-a-Roll-a*—oh fie! (H.M.V. POP233/7M422). There is a surprise from **Pat Kirby** in a reasonably straight *Greensleeves*, coupled with a hilarious vocal version of Nevin's *Narcissus* called *What a Heavenly Night for Love*—how absolutely spiffing (Bruns. 05575\*). **Nellie Lutcher** has the best sleeve of the month and puts a tremendous amount into her songs on a Philips EP (BBE12045). A desirable packet. A real charmer is **Pony Parade** by **Willy Schobbe** and his Orchestra on H.M.V. JO457, coupled with his own *Trumpet Tango*. This is a nap. And so, too, if you like him, is **Burl Ives**, particularly on Bruns. EP OE9201. This includes a dazzling *Frankie and Johnnie* with a light rhythmic accompaniment that is a joy and in complete contrast to Lena Horne last month, immediately followed by a song called *The Deceiver*, which may deceive you until you hear the opening line—there was a young lady who played her guitar, which I believe all schoolboys sing and which I personally have not heard since I was 14. Mr. Ives also contributes a set of Australian folk songs on LA8739, but if you prefer American work songs there is an LP by **Ernie Ford** which contains some really original and beautifully turned material. This, called "This Lusty Land", is on Capitol LC6825. This is not the usual rasping Country and Western style and can be sampled by other than fans.

There is an avalanche of Continental light music and Latin-American dancery on LP, which must be measured in feet. For the real thing try *Ecos de Columbia* by various artists on London HBG1055, and for Westernised music I would select the ever dependable **Eddy Barclay** on Felsted PDL85014—a collection called "Music to make her yours". There is also a plethora of Portuguese Washerwomen and birds and bees—respectively seven and six versions of each. There is some divergence of opinion as to whether the Lisbon laundry is operated by one woman or employs a staff; anyway my own selection is **Frank Poulcel** et ses cordes (wonderful!) on H.M.V. JOF117. Believe it or not but the composer of this confection is André Popp. On the back is

*J'ai trop aimé*, by Jacob Gade, the *Jelousy* man, described as "Tango Glamour", and you can pronounce that how you like! For *The Birds and the Bees* you can really toss up, but if you should think I am not earning my keep if I fail to recommend then let us settle for our own **Alma Cogan** on H.M.V. POP223/7M415. Miss Cogan has a rival in **Dorothy Collins**, who has a good deal more than a laugh in her voice on Vogue Q72173\*—*He's Got Me Hook, Line and Sink*, and I wouldn't doubt it for a moment.

Before the war we used to get records by **Dick Haymes** and **Helen Forrest** in duet. Both reappear separately. Helen Forrest on Capitol CL14594\*, and Dick Haymes on LC6823. Both he and **Frank Sinatra** (LCT6106)—"Songs for Swingin' Lovers"—sing standard classics and both include Gershwin's *Love is Here to Stay*. Sinatra has out of period accompaniments for his Cole Porter songs, and repeats one verse of *Anything Goes*. On a vocal record that would seem to be plain crazy. Porter may be near the knuckle here, but then why choose point numbers if you are going to remove the point? Oh these crooners! **Jimmie Lunceford's** "For Dancers Only" sounds like old recordings on Bruns. LAT8738, and **Harry James** includes an interesting *September Song* in his LP on Capitol LCT6107, mostly straightforward trumpet playing with a big band. The cocktail hour is taken care of by **Bill Snyder** playing a pleasant enough piano in "Music for Holding Hands" (it's all right, you needn't if you don't want to) on Bruns. LAT8108, and **Michel Legrand** and **Emil Stern** join forces at two pianos on Felsted PDL85010. This is a mixture of well and little known numbers, including *Le Grisi* by Jean Wiener of the famous piano act Wiener and Doucet, who once came to London to play Mozart at the Wigmore, while filling a spot at the Holborn Empire for the rest of the week. Doucet's record of the *Liebestod* is still just about the naughtiest thing on disc! A novelty, though it ceases to be one after half an hour, is the record by the **Norman Luboff Choir** called "Songs of the West", a collection of plaintive chants from the great open spaces of the American continent. Included is *Cool Water*, played by **Billy May** on his EP (Philips BBL7083 and Capitol EAP1013—"It's Billy May Time"). "The night was made for love" is the title of the latest **Stanley Black** collection on Decca LK4130—very good of its kind, and **Les Brown** has an LP called "That Sound of Renown" (Vogue LVA9019), which starts well and then—off we go with a screaming recording that vitiates what might well be some interesting work. The record includes modern jazz versions of Gershwin's "American in Paris" and Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker" Suite, played seriatim, though not much time is left for the waltz, which maybe is just as well! What to do with the sugar plum? Answer nothing. It is played virtually straight, celesta and all. Ethel Smith once recorded *Tico Tico* on the organ, but here is **Ken Griffin** on an LP called "Latin Americana" and including *Yours*, which I see has Latin-American sounding names as its authors. We never thought of that when Miss Lynn used to sing it to us in countless Hippodromes during the war (Philips BBR8093). **Bunny Berigan** will mean something to old hands in the jazz game. "Take it Bunny" on Philips BBL7086 contains old recordings, including one made at Glenn Miller's first recording session in 1935 (*Solo Hop*). The record includes *I'd Rather Lead a Band* and *Let Yourself Go*, both good opening numbers for a show band and once coupled by Ambrose, but hardly the thing for a sideman to show his paces.

**Eric Delaney's** *Truckin* and *Oranges and Lemons* on Nixa N15054 is notable for some tympani, and **Norman Grant's** strict tempo record (*Esquire* 5-103) for the word "vocal"

after one of the titles! **Adam Rennie** and his Scottish Country Dance Quartet devote themselves exclusively to Irish Jigs and settings of things like *When Irish Eyes are Smiling* on Nixa SN9006, and **Marie Benson** sends the 600 up for Philips (PB600) in *Sweet Fanny Adams*, who was fat, and *Does You Do*, about which I can only say "Well done". A nice old-fashioned style here. Paul Whiteman used to have a liking for Rimsky-Korsakov, whose *Song of India* (the Hindu Merchant's song from "Sadko") crops up yet again for jazzing by **Laurie Johnson** on H.M.V. JO453. From a mass of Irish and Scottish records, non-specialists may enjoy **Ian McLeish** in a composed ballad called *The Northern Lights of Old Aberdeen* backed by *Scots Wha' Ha*, sung with real fire on Nixa SN3002, while **Frankie Laine** reminds us of his sobriquet "Mr. Rhythm" in *The Cry of the Wild Goose and Mule Train* on Mercury HT109. **Louis Armstrong's** *Memphis Blues* is as expected but what he is doing with a ridiculous novelty called *The Faithful Hussar* I cannot imagine (Philips PB604). **Sean Mooney** sings Irish ballads on H.M.V. POP230. *If We Only Had Old Ireland Over There* refers to Australia. "If the Blarney Stone stood out in Sydney Harbour and if Killarney's lakes ran into Botany Bay" etc. **Harry Secombe** shows off his new operatic voice in *We'll Keep a Welcome* and *The World is Mine Tonight* on Philips PB599.

On 45's **Guy Lombardo** sounds absolutely unchanged in *Charleston Parisien* and an amusing song called *Rinka Tinka Man*, to whom "Mr. Handel can't hold a candle" on Capitol CL14585\*, but **Red Nichols** is all too changed in *Speak Easy*, which he spoils by adding a chorus on CL14596\*. **Lawrence Welk** is good in *Practice, Practice What You Preach*, a piece of Ink Spot evangelism on Vogue Q72167\* and presents *The Lennon Sisters* (equal billing) in *Graduation Day* on Q72176\*. **Ken Mackintosh's** *The Berkeley Hunt*, should not be heard within miles of Amersham or Hunting Metroland, but **The Smith Brothers** will find some sympathy for *Smith by Smith* and with Don Smith's band on Decca F10759\*. You will have to buy **The Roland Shaw Orchestra's** *You're Only Young Once* for its sub-title—*La Vita è un Paradiso di Bugie*! **Tommy Reilly** plays a mouth organ on the reverse (F10758\*), and **Sid Phillips** playing *Glad Rag Doll* is one to wind up the party (H.M.V. POP226/7M418). To wind up this particular party here are two EP's—**Dean Martin** singing *Mississippi Mud*, *Georgia* and other numbers very well indeed on Capitol EAP1022, and **Les Baxter** in his excellent version of *The Poor People of Paris*, which is included on EAP1019. All of which, of course, represents only a fraction of the records heard, but enough surely to help out the holiday. Needless to say "Harlequin" will not be packing his gramophone.

Later: test pressings of H.M.V.'s records of two London shows have just come in. To recommend "Cranks" is as dangerous as recommending "Waiting for Godot". This revue has now moved into its third London home and is doing well; it deserves to, but it is definitely a visual. It rhymes Paul Robeson, Gloria Swanson and Lord Tennyson, it refers to "virgins in Slough" and has a couplet: "The Blackpool Tower, bursts into flower". A harp and harpsichord played by young men in open shirts completes the "artiness". It is fair to say that you will enjoy the record after the show, and if you hear the record you will want to see the show to see if it is all really true (CLP1082). Lighting by Michael Northern says the brilliant sleeve! At the opposite end of the pole is "Wild Grows the Heather", the British musical that failed in the West End but has pleased the Provinces, and that should go for the record too. (DLP1125).

# JAZZ AND SWING

Reviewed by

EDGAR JACKSON and OLIVER KING

TO cover as many as possible of the ever increasing number of records that should be dealt with each month in this section of THE GRAMOPHONE, for some while now Oliver King and I have had to reduce our reviews to lengths which we can only hope have satisfied our readers more than they have satisfied us.

But this month, beset with more records than ever, we have had to go even further and in many cases give, in place of what we know as reviews, reports which to our minds are not much more than just notes.

The alternative would have been to omit even a mention of many records to which we feel at least your attention should be drawn. We think that this would be even less satisfactory. If, however, in future you would rather have longer reviews of fewer records, please let me know. O.K. and I will do our utmost to meet your wishes. E.J.

## \*Julian "Cannonball" Adderley

\*\*Cannonball (Adderley, Jerry Jones) (s); Willows (J. Jones) (b); Everglade (Adderley, Jones) (f); Cynthia's in Love (Gish, White, Owens) (b); The Song Is You (Kern) (a); Hurricane Connie (J. Jones) (c); Purple Shades (Douglas et al) (d); Rose Room (Hickman, Williams) (c); Fallen Feather (Quincy Jones) (i); You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To (Porter) (g) (12 in. EmArcy LP E1102—25s. 04d.)

(a) (Am. EmArcy 11957), (b) (do. 11958), (c) (do. 11959), (d) (do. 11960)—Adderley (alto, flute); Jerome Richardson (tr); Cecil Payne (bar); Nat Adderley (tp); Jimmy Cleveland (tmb); John Williams (pno); Paul Chambers (bass); Kenny Clarke (drs.) 21/7/1955. U.S.A.

(e) (do. 11961), (f) (do. 11962), (g) (do. 11963)—Personnel as for (a), except J. J. Johnson (tmb) replaces Cleveland. 29/7/1955. U.S.A.

(h) (do. 11964), (i) (do. 11965), (j) (do. 11966)—Personnel as for (a), except J. J. Johnson (tmb) replaces Cleveland; Max Roach (drs) replaces Clarke. 5/8/1955. U.S.A.

Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, seventeen-year-old alto saxist from Florida, has come into prominence since he and his brother, trumpeter Nat, arrived in New York last summer. Judged by his performance on this record, however, here is a cannonball which—so far as I'm concerned—completely misses its target.

Mr. Adderley's debt to Charlie Parker is obvious, but he has neither the imagination nor the lucidity of that great musician. His tone is often strained and ugly, his phrasing sloppy, his ideas trivial. A couple of the slower numbers—Cynthia's in Love and Quincy Jones's delightful Fallen Feathers—show that he is able to play more sensitively. On Hurricane Connie he takes a flute solo. Easily the best features of this record are the drumming by Kenny Clarke and Max Roach. E.J.

## Vic Ash Quartet

\*\*Early Morning (Le Sage) (a)  
\*\*Just One Of Those Things (Porter) (b)  
(Tempo 78 A137; 45 45A137—6s. 3d.)

(a) (Tempo VOG596), (b) (do. VOG598)—Ash (clt); Terry Shannon (pno); Pete Elderfield (bass); Benny Goodman (drs). 18/2/1956, during a N.J.F. concert at the Royal Festival Hall, London.

Previous issue: (a) included in TAP2.

Early Morning was included in the "British Modern Jazz Scene 1956" LP, reviewed last month. I described this group as sounding a shade too generic. The criticism applies even more aptly to Just One Of Those Things, particularly as Terry Shannon—the most talented member of the Quartet—takes no solo on this side. E.J.

## \*Chris Barber's Jazz Band

\*\*Whistlin' Rufus (Kerry Mills) (a); Big House Blues (Alley) (a); April Showers (S Ivers) (a); One Sweet Letter From You (Warren) (b); Hushabye (Sunshine) (b); We Shall Walk Through The Valley (Trad.) (V by Dick Bishop) (c)  
(Nixa Jazz Today LP NJT502—26s. 5d.)

(Nixa, tape numbers LL1002-A, -B)

(a)—Barber (tmb); Monty Sunshine (clt); Pat Haxox (tp); Lonnie Donegan (bjo); Micky

Ashman (bass); Ron Bowden (drs). 20/3/1 56. London.

(b)—Same personnel. 26/3/1956. London.

(c)—Same personnel. 4/4/1956. London.

This is rather a mixed bag. On the credit side we have a fine version of Whistling Rufus and a high spot in the Sunshine clarinet solo Hush-a-Bye; on the debit, the rather messy ensemble on April Showers and One Sweet Letter. These sound rather as if the band were either unsure of what was called for, or else bored with such "pop" material. At all events, the cleanliness and precision we associate with the Barber band are not in evidence. The other tracks are up to standard. O.K.

## Sidney Bechet

\*\*Everybody Loves Saturday Night (Trad.) (b)

\*\*Laura (Mercer) (b)  
(Vogue 78 V2378; 45 45V2378—6s.)

(a) (French Vogue 55-V-5431)—Bechet (sop); Andre Rewellott (clt); Guy Longnon (tp); Jean-Louis Durand (tmb); Eddie Bernard (pno); Zozo d'Halluin (bass); Andre Jourdan (drs). 24/12/1955. Paris.

(b) (do. 5433)—Personnel as for (a), except Rene Franc replaces Rewellott. Same session.

Average Bechet, somewhat under-recorded in the case of the Saturday Night epic, which is an unusually long side, featuring a weak trumpet and Bechet—surely it is he?—on clarinet. Or has he instilled his mannerisms into Rewillott as he did into Bob Wilber a decade ago in New York? Laura steps up the tempo half-way, only to revert to the more usual slow beat. I can't say I think it improves it. Recording on this side rather rough. O.K.

## \*Clifford Brown—Max Roach

\*\*Sweet Clifford (Brown) (a); Stompin' At The Savoy (Sampson) (b)  
(EmArcy EP ERE1501—11s. 10d.)

(a) (Am. EmArcy 10800), (b) (do. 10806)—Brown (tp); Harold Land (tr); Richie Powell (pno); George Morrow (bass); Max Roach (drs). 1055. U.S.A.

No name is given for this group on this EP, but as it comes from an American LP entitled "Brown and Roach, Inc."—the first 12 in. LP to be put out there by Clifford and Max's at the time regular unit—it seemed to me that the best way to list it was under their joint names.

Thoughtful, finely-shaded trumpet by Clifford Brown and intelligent, dynamic drumming by Max Roach make it a better-than-average

## ABBREVIATIONS

Acc	..	accompaniment	pno	..	piano
alto	..	alto saxophone	tp	..	tenor saxophone
arr	..	arranger	tr	..	trumpet
bar	..	baritone saxophone	tmb	..	trombone
bass	..	string-bass	Trad	..	traditional
bjo	..	banjo	V	..	vocal refrain
C	..	coloured artist(s)	vib	..	vibraphone
clt	..	clarinet	voc	..	vocalist
drs	..	drums	vln	..	violin
gtr	..	guitar	xyz	..	xylophone

\* indicates microgroove record, 33 1/3 r.p.m. LPs and 45 r.p.m. EPs are distinguished by the letters LP for the latter the catalogue number for the former, EP for the latter.

Asterisks (maximum five) indicate mainly the reviewers' opinion of each record as compared with all others mentioned, but take into account also how a performance compares with the general standard achieved by the artist(s) in previously released recordings.

When known, the date and place of recording, and if considered necessary also nationality or race of artist(s), are given following the master number or personnel.

record. Normally I avoid long drum solos, but Max Roach's, as well as being displays of his prodigious technique, always have shape and pattern. Both tenor saxist Harold Land and pianist Richie Powell (Bud's brother) play reasonably interesting solos.

It is with regret that I have to tell you that we shall not be getting any new records featuring Clifford (affectionately known as "Brownie") Brown or "Richie" Powell. They were killed together on June 27th last in a motor smash at Bedford, Indiana, U.S.A. Brown was only twenty-five years old. E.J.

## \*Don Byas and his Orchestra

\*\*Red Cross (Charlie Parker) (a); Walking Around (Byas) (a); Dynamo A (Gillespie) (b); Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone (Step) (b)  
(Felsted EP ESD3018—10s. 54d.)

(a) (French Blue Star 23905)—Byas (tr); Peanuts Holland (tp); Billy Taylor (pno); J. J. Tliche (gtr); Jean Bouchety (bass); Buford Oliver (drs). Early 1947. Paris.

(b) (do. 23906)—Personnel as for (a), plus Hubert Rostaing (alto); Tyree Glenn (tmb). Early 1947. Paris.

Recorded nine years ago and using bop phrases that have become clichés, this music sounds self-conscious to-day. But there are good solos from Tyree Glenn (an underrated trombonist if ever there were one), Peanuts Holland, Billy Taylor and Don Byas, although the last-named does get a little flurried on a couple of tracks. E.J.

## \*Bob Cooper

\*\*Tongue Twister (Cooper) (c); Strike Up The Band (Gershwin) (a); Deep In A Dream (Van Heusen) (b)  
(Capitol EP EAP1021—11s. 10d.)

(a) (Am. Capitol 13747)—Cooper (tr, oboe, English horn); Bud Shank (alto, flute, tr); Jimmy Giuffrè (tr, clt, bar); Stu Williamson (tp, tmb); Bob Enevoldsen (tmb, tr, bass-clt); Claude Williamson (pno); Max Bennett (bass); Stan Levy (drs). 26/4/1955. U.S.A.

(b) (do. 13958)—Personnel as for (a), except add John Graas (French horn); Joe Mondragon (bass) replaces Bennett; Shelly Manne (drs) replaces Levy. 13/6/1955. U.S.A.

(c) (do. 13646)—Personnel as for (b). 14/6/1955. U.S.A.

A group of eminent West Coast modernists play their own brand of jazz with intelligence and verve. A lengthy version of the Bob Cooper composition Tongue Twister takes up the whole of one side. Strike Up The Band, at a spang ng tempo, is followed by a complex arrangement of Deep In A Dream, the scoring creating some intriguing tone-colours. Bud Shank, whose Quintet has this month a 12 in. LP side all to itself (see page 105) sounds perhaps the finest of the soloists. E.J.

## \*Nils-Bertil Dahlander Quartet

"Those Swinging Swedes"—Vol. 9  
\*\*Lullaby Of The Leaves (Petkere); What Is This Thing Called Love (Porter); Laura (Rankin)  
(Esquire EP EP9—13s. 74d.)

(Swedish Metronome, tape numbers MREP60-A, -B)—Dahlander (trs); Stig Larson (vib); Rune Gustafsson (gtr); Bengt Carlsson (bass). 8/2/1954. Stockholm.

Delicate, tasteful performances by a Quartet led by Nils-Bertil Dahlander, a Swedish drummer who has worked in the U.S. with the Terry Gibbs Quartet. Best soloist in the group



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Act 2:

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Act 3:

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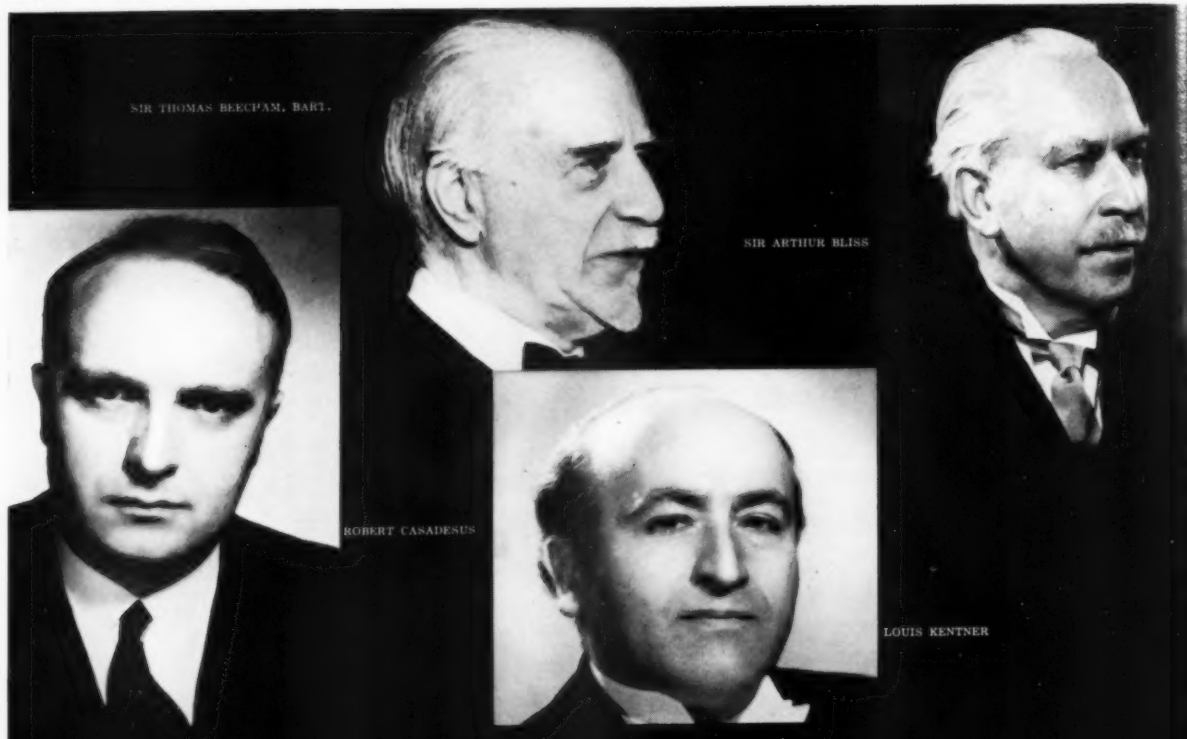
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is Rune Gustafsson, the guitarist. Fault with the music as a whole is that it doesn't swing. E.J.

### Johnny Dankworth and his Orchestra

\*\*\*\*Applegate (Dankworth) (b)  
\*\*\*\*Experiments With Mice (Dankworth) (a)  
(Parlophone R4185—5s. 7d.)  
(a) (Parlophone CE15569), (b) (do. CE15570)—Dankworth (alto, clt); Pete Warner (tr); Alex Leslie (bar); Dougie Roberts (tp); Laurie Monk (tmb); Derrick Abbott, Bill Metcalf, Stan Palmer, Colin Wright (pts); Garry Brown, Harry Buckles, Danny Elwood, Bill Geldard (tmb); Dave Lee (pno); Bill Sutcliffe (bass); Kenny Clare (drs). 10/5/1956. London.

Just in case you haven't heard any of the many broadcasts *Experiments* has already had, let me explain that it is the irrepressible Mr. Dankworth giving us his ideas of how Messrs. Billy May, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Gerry Mulligan, Sauter and Finegan, Eric Delaney, and Stan Kenton might have dealt with the nursery rhyme tune *Three Blind Mice*. It's our Johnny at his most imaginative and witty best, both as an arranger and an instrumentalist. Should you want to know more Johnny himself will tell it you on the record.

The coupling is a straightforward swingeroo, with excellent Dankworth alto to add its other attraction. But it's those mischievous little mice that have really gnawed their way into me. E.J.

### ★Buddy De Franco

"Pretty Moods"  
\*\*\*Tenderly (Lawrence, Gross); Lover Man (Weill, Anderson); Deep Purple (De Rose); Yesterdays (Kern); If I Should Lose You (Rainer, Robin)  
Columbia-Clef LP 33C9022—39s. 6d.)

(Am. Norgren, tape numbers MGN16-A, -B)—De Franco (clt); Sonny Clark (pno); Gene Wright (bass); Bobby White (drs). Circa early 1954. U.S.A.

Curiously it is in some of the codas that one finds here some of the most inventive and delightful De Franco. For the rest . . . well, the record is called "Pretty Moods by Buddy De Franco" and that just about sums it up. Buddy, unassumingly but very adequately accompanied, plays with his usual immaculate musicianship, and for the most part with impeccable taste. The lapses are when he introduces quotes from other tunes—something which I have never thought particularly clever or liked from anyone at any time, and which I find more than usually out of place in this otherwise pleasant and rockingly tuneful context—a description that remains accurate enough except in the for once played fast (and sounding none the better for it) *Yesterdays*. E.J.

### ★Jimmy Deuchar Quartet

\*\*\*Dance Little Lady (Coward) (a); Dancing In The Dark (Coslow) (b); Dancing On The Ceiling (Rodgers) (c); Dance Of The Infidels (Powell) (d)  
(Esquire LP 20-050—29s. 6d.)

(a) (Esquire EEP-811-2), (b) (do. -812-2), (c) (do. -813-2), (d) (do. -813-1)—Deuchar (tp); Terry Shannon (pno); Lennie Bush (bass); Tony Crombie (drs). 4/10/1955. London.

(a) and (b) available also on Esquire EP103.  
Britain's Jimmy Deuchar may now be ranked among the leading modernist trumpet players in Europe. A sensitive and intelligent musician, he displays both these qualities on this record.

Bud Powell's tune, *Dance Of The Infidels*, takes up the whole of one side. Apart from good Deuchar, it has a couple of ambitious and intriguing solos from Terry Shannon. Lennie Bush and Tony Crombie give fine support to the soloists. E.J.

### ★Lonnie Donegan Skiffle Group

\*\*\*Railroad Bill (V by Donegan and Dick "Cisco" Bishop); Stackalee (V by Bishop); The Ballad Of Jesse James (V by Donegan); Ol' Riley (V by Donegan and Bishop) (All trad.)  
(Nixa Jazz Today EP NJE1017—11s. 10d.)

(Nixa, tape numbers UU1017-A, -B)  
(a)—Donegan, Dick Bishop (gtrs); Chris Barber

(bass); Ron Bowden (drs). 11/1/1956. London.  
(b)—Same personnel. 4/4/1956. London.

Nothing here that is likely to equal in popularity Lonnie Donegan's *Last John*. Some sound more like Jimmie Rodgers and the white country blues singers than the Leadbelly and Blind Blake they should more nearly approximate. They are interesting; so are the notes provided on the sleeve by Lonnie Donegan himself, who obviously loves his music. A special mark for Chris Barber's fine bass playing, but I would have liked an occasional change from the preponderance of strings in the form of harmonica, jug or washboard. O.K.

### ★Roy Eldridge

\*\*\*\*Feeling A Draft (Eldridge); When Your Lover Has Gone (Swan); I Can't Get Started (Duke); Don't Blame Me (McHugh)  
(Columbia-Clef EP SEB10036—11s. 14d.)

(Am. Clef, tape numbers EP227-A, -B)—Eldridge (tp); Oscar Peterson (pno); Herb Ellis (gtr); Ray Brown (bass); Alvin Stoller (drs). 1954. New York.

This is the second half of what in America was issued (circa mid-1954) as an LP. The first half, on Columbia-Clef SEB10014, was reviewed last January by Mike Nevard while I was away on sick leave. Awarding the record four stars, Mike wrote: "Roy is, as ever, warm and human. He has power and punch—the deft touch of the master". I'm not so certain about the "as ever", but I ungrudgingly concede that the rest of what Mike said applies as forcefully to this half of the LP as it did to the one he reviewed.

That it was split is a pity, especially because while the necessary new sleeve note by Alun Morgan is well up to his usual well-informed standard, it has replaced what an American colleague describes as perhaps Norman Granz's best essay yet on the subject of jazz fundamentals. E.J.

### ★Tal Farlow

\*\*\*These Foolish Things (Maschwitz); I Remember You (Mercer); How Deep Is The Ocean? (Berlin); Fascinating Rhythm (Gershwin); Manhattan (Rodgers); Autumn Leaves (Prevert, Kosma); It's You Or No One (Styne, Cahn); Tenderly (Gross); There Will Never Be Another You (Warren, Gordon); Just One Of Those Things (Porter)  
(12 in. Columbia-Clef LP 33CX10029—39s. 7d.)

(Am. Norgren, tape numbers MGN1027-A, -B)—Farlow (gtr); Claude Williamson (pno); Red Mitchell (bass); Stan Levy (drs). Spring, 1955. Hollywood.

It was in 1950 that Tal Farlow, 35-year-old guitarist from North Carolina, came into prominence as a member of the Red Norvo Trio. Playing finger-style, he gets a highly individual and expressive tone out of his instrument. This LP shows off his remarkable technique and artistry.

The slower numbers come off best. Three of them—*How Deep Is The Ocean*, *Tenderly* and an out-of-tempo solo, *Autumn Leaves*—are outstanding. Farlow is not so inventive in the faster numbers, but he always swings, helped by some good playing from Claude Williamson, Red Mitchell and Stan Levy. Guitar addicts add another star. E.J.

### ★Stan Getz Quintet

\*\*\*\*Stars Fell On Alabama (Perkins) (a); The Way You Look Tonight (Kern) (b); "Tis Autumn (Nemo) (c); Lever, Come Back To Me (Romberg) (d)  
(Columbia-Clef EP SEB10034—11s. 14d.)

(a) (Am. Clef 89025-A), (b) (do. 89025-B), (c) (do. 89042-A), (d) (do. 89042-B)—Getz (tr); Duke Jordan (pno); Jimmy Raney (gtr); Bill Crow (bass); Frank Isola (drs). 12/12/1952. New York.

Few modern tenor soloists combine technique and good taste quite so perfectly as can Stan Getz. These four tunes, all good ones, find him on top of his form—ideas flowing easily, and helped by first-rate accompaniment. E.J.

### Dizzy Gillespie Quintet

\*\*Hey, Pete! (Harding, Gillespie) (V by Gillespie) (a)  
\*\*One Alone (Gillespie) (b)  
(Columbia-Clef LB10032—8s. 7d.)

(a) (Am. Norgren C1717), (b) (do. C1718)—Gillespie (tp); Hank Mobley (tr); Wade Legge (pno); Lou Hackney (bass); Charlie Persip (drs). Probably circa mid-1954.

This was the group Dizzy Gillespie performed with at clubs during 1954 and its obvious mediocrity doesn't help matters. The odd vocal at the start of *Hey, Pete!* is followed by a typically audacious Gillespie trumpet solo, but on the whole these are both very scrappy sides. E.J.

### ★Benny Goodman Sextet

\*\*\*Farewell Blues (Schoebel, Mares Rappolo) (k); Toodle-Dee-Yoo-Dee (Nancy Reed) (V by Nancy Reed) (l); Soft Winds (Goodman) (b); Memories Of You (Blake) (a); I Surrender, Dear (Barris) (e); Boy Meets Girl (Goodman) (f); Temptation Rag (Weslyn-Lodge) (i); Lullaby Of The Leaves (Young) (j); Gilly (Goodman) (g); Oh, Babe! (Prima) (V by Jimmy Ricks and Nancy Reed) (h); The Sheik Of Araby (Snyder) (c); Poor Butterfly (Golden, Hubbell) (d)  
(Columbia EPAlbum SEGC-9, -10, -11—3 1s. 4d.)

(a) (Am. Columbia WCO-26284), (b) (do. -26285)—Goodman (tr); Lionel Hampton (vib); Fletcher Henderson (pno); Charlie Christian (gtr); Arthur Bernstein (bass); Nick Fatool (drs). 22/11/1939. New York.

(c) (do. -26718), (d) (do. -26719)—Personnel as for (a), except Johnny Guarneri (pno) replaces Henderson. 10/4/1940. Hollywood.

(e) (do. -26743), (f) (do. -26744)—Personnel as for (c). 10/4/1940. Hollywood.

(g) (do. CO-29261)—Goodman (clt); Georgie Auld (tr); Cootie Williams (tp); Ken Kersey (pno); Christian (gtr); Bernstein (bass); Harry Jaeger (drs). 10/12/1940. New York.

(h) (do. -44431)—Goodman (clt); Terry Gibbs (tr); Teddy Wilson (pno); Johnny Smith (gtr); Bob Carter (bass); Terry Snyder (drs). 10/10/1950. U.S.A.

(i) (do. -44674), (j) (do. -44677)—Personnel as for (h), except Charlie Smith (drs) replaces Snyder. 24/11/1950. U.S.A.

(k) (do. -45842), (l) (do. -45843)—Goodman (clt); Gibbs (vib); Paul Smith (pno); J. Smith (gtr); Eddie Safraniski (bass); Sid Balkin (drs). 13/6/1951. U.S.A.

Previous releases (all deleted): (a) and (b) Parlophone R2761; (c) and (d) R2738; (e) R2757; (f) R2755

Universal International's film "The Benny Goodman Story" resulted in a flood of Goodman recordings, old and new. Indeed they piled up at such a rate, from the two Brunswick 12 in. LPs from the film sound-track to various humble 78s, that it became impossible to review them all, and sooner than adopt the unfair course of mentioning just a few, I reluctantly decided to pass up the whole lot, in the hope that you would at least learn of their existence from the companies' supplements.

But the set I am dealing with this week you are unlikely even to have heard of unless you take *THE GRAMOPHONE Popular Record Catalogue*, for it is a Columbia Overseas issue, and although these are obtainable through any dealer to special order, they are not normally stocked, nor are they mentioned in the ordinary Columbia lists.

As you will note from the heading details, the set consists of sixteen Goodman Sextet recordings. Six are reissues. They have been sought after collectors' rarities ever since they were deleted. Of the remaining ten I need only add that all of them (including the 1950 and '51 recordings) are in the long well-known style of the Goodman medium-sized group records which followed his sensation-making 1935, '36 and '37 Trio and Quartet recordings for Victor.

There is, however, one thing that makes the issue different from any other. The three EPs are made into (and sold only as) an album. This is done by the simple expedient of gluing the three sleeves together with pieces of tape.

It seems to me an excellent idea for those who may wish to make their EPs (or for that matter LPs) of their favourite artists into albums. You merely tape the sleeves together so that they open out like the leaves of a book,

or concertina-wise if you so prefer, and there seems to be no limit to the number of sleeves one can join up in this way. E.J.

### \*Bobby Hackett and his Jazz Band

\*\*\*Big Butter And Egg Man (Armstrong) (f); New Orleans (Carmichael) (c); That's A Plenty (Lollack, Gilbert) (e); Basin Street Blues (S. Williams) (V by Jack Teagarden) (d); Muskrat Ramble (Ory) (b); I Guess I'll Have To Change My Plan (Schwartz, Dietz) (h); Royal Garden Blues (S. and C. Williams) (e); Struttin' With Some Barbecue (Armstrong) (a)  
(Capitol LP LC6824—25s. 0j4d.)

(e) (Am. Capitol 14640), (b) (do. 14641), (c) (do. 14642), (d) (do. 14644), (a) (do. 14640), (f) (do. 14643), (g) (do. 14650), (h) (do. 14651)—Hackett (cornet); Matty Matlock (clt); Abe Lincoln, Jack Teagarden (tms); Don Owens (pno); Nappy Lamare (dr); Phil Stephens (bass, tuba); Nick Fatool (drs). 18-19/11/1935. Hollywood.

Some of the most relaxed jazz to be heard this month is on this record. Bobby Hackett used to be tagged "the second Bix". Now his style is hotter, with a great deal of Armstrong in it, yet still unmistakably his own. His solos on *New Orleans* and *Basin Street Blues* are particularly delightful; on the latter he builds up his final chorus ornately, but with great artistry.

Both trombonists take good solos. *Basin Street Blues*, of course, has Jack Teagarden stepping forward to sing—just a shade wearily, perhaps—and play his famous choruses. Matty Matlock performs competently, but without much fire. The fast Dixieland numbers—*That's A Plenty* and *Muskrat Ramble*—are the least distinguished. Hackett is content to take *Big Butter and Egg Man* and *Struttin' With Some Barbecue* modestly, not attempting to emulate Armstrong's virtuoso approach. E.J.

### \*Bengt Hallberg Trio

\*\*\*Opus One (Sy Oliver) (a); Tre Birre (Hallberg) (a); Honeysuckle Rose (Waller) (b); Stars Fell On Alabama (Perkins) (b)  
(Esquire EP EP96—11s. 10d.)

(a) (Swedish Metronome, tape numbers MREP-24A), (b) (do. -24B)—Hallberg (pno); Gunnar Johnson (bass); Robert Edman (drs). 12/10/1935. Stockholm.

Four splendid tracks by this subtle and sensitive Swedish pianist. Bengt Hallberg will hint at more ideas during one chorus than most people play in a whole record. His *Honeysuckle Rose* is a remarkably personal interpretation. E.J.

### \*Earl Hines Quintet

\*\*\*Night Life In Pompei (Hines) (b); Air France Stomp (Hines) (d); Rhythm Business (Bigard) (c); Chicago (Fisher) (a)  
(Vogue EP EPV1144—13s. 7j4d.)

(a) (Am. Royal Discs RJS-908-1), (b) (do. -909-3), (c) (do. -911-2), (d) (do. -913-2)—Hines (pno); Barney Bigard (clt); Buck Clayton (tp); Arvell Shaw (bass); Wallace Bishop (drs). 4/11/1940. U.S.A.  
Previous issues: (a) Esquire 10-055, with *Tes For Two*; (b) and (d) 10-090; (c) 10-100, with *Japanese Sandman*.

Made while Hines, Bigard and Arvell Shaw were in Paris with Louis Armstrong's All Stars in 1949, this record contains good, but not outstanding jazz. Bigard solos gracefully (notably in *Rhythm Business*) and Hines plays his usual intricate yet swinging piano. Some of the best work comes from Buck Clayton. His playing is forceful, yet delicate. E.J.

### \*Bobby Jaspar's "New Jazz" Group

\*\*\*You Took Advantage Of Me (Rodgers) (a); Sanguine (Crolla) (b); Jeux De Quartes (Jaspar) (c); Easy To Love (Porter) (a); Hornpipe (Jaspar) (b); More Than You Know (Youmans) (b); Early Wake (Sadi) (c); Honky Tonk (Jaspar) (c)  
(Vogue LP LDE107—29s. 6j4d.)

(French Vogue, tape numbers MG369, MG370)  
(a)—Jaspar (tr); Jean Aldegon (alto, bass-clt); Armand Migiani (bar); Buzz Gardner, Roger Guerin (tp); Nat Peck (tmb); Pierre Michelto (bass); Andre Jourdan (drs).

(b)—Personnel as for (a), except Gerard "Dave" Ponchonnet (drs) replaces Jourdan.  
(c)—Personnel as for (b), plus Fats Sadi (tbb). All 1955, Paris.

"Sombre" is the word to describe much of the music on this LP. Bobby Jaspar, the Belgian

tenor saxophonist, fronts his own group in some experimental jazz. As well as playing tenor, he composed and arranged several of the items. He is a competent, agile soloist, but I find the lack of expression in his work leads to boredom—even when he does throw in a few good ideas.

The same remarks apply to most of the arrangements—notably a funeral *Easy To Love*. Bleakness has its place in orchestration, but a little contrast keeps the listener interested. *Sanguine* sounds remarkably anaemic. On the other hand *Jeux De Quartes* is surprisingly witty as well as clever.

It must be coincidence, but the tracks involving the other Belgian—vibraphonist Fats

## MASTER NUMBERS

As and from next month, master and tape numbers will no longer be included in the discographical details regularly given for all records reviewed in this section of THE GRAMOPHONE.

This will allow more space for actual reviews, but the main reason for it is that the master number has ceased to serve the one purpose for which we published it—the confirmation of the recording date of the record reviewed, and as an aid to determining the approximate recording dates of other records with adjacent or near master numbers.

Some companies still allocate a separate master number to each individual selection they record at the time of recording. But it appears only if the selection is issued as a "single". If, as is so often the case these days, it is used as part of an LP or EP set, the tape comprising the set gets what is generally known as a tape number. This is not allocated until the set is made up, so gives no indication of the recording date(s) of the various items of which it is composed, or, of course, of other items on LPs or EPs bearing consecutive or near tape numbers.

Furthermore, in such cases where individual master numbers, which might give clues to recording dates, have been allocated, in the case of foreign recordings they are often extremely difficult to ascertain, because two English concerns which between them distribute the bulk of the American and Continental jazz recordings released here are among those which replace the original and correct master and tape numbers with purely arbitrary substitute references of their own. This explains how it is that so many of the master and tape numbers given in these columns are entirely different from those printed on the labels. Those given by us are the correct ones.

Sadi—are the most worth while. His own lively composition, *Early Wake*, has good solos by himself and Jaspar. E.J.

### \*"Jazz Workshop"—Vol. 2

\*\*\*Blues For Some Bones (Mingus, Lewis) (b); I'll Remember April (De Paul, Raye, Johnston) (a)  
(Vogue LP LDE178—29s. 6j4d.)

(a) (Am. Debut DLP14-A), (b) (do. -B)—Willie Dennis, Benny Green, J. J. Johnson, Kai Winding (tms); John Lewis (pno); Charlie Mingus (bass); Art Taylor (drs). Summer, 1953. Brooklyn, U.S.A.

The first of these Jazz Workshops featuring four trombonists was issued by Vogue about eighteen months ago. This record presents the same musicians in two extended performances. I gave the first volume five stars, but the present release is more mixed in quality, having the defects as well as the virtues of spontaneity.

Benny Green's solo stands out in *I'll Remember April*. J. J. Johnson relies a little too much on his mannerisms on this side, yet it is he who plays the best trombone choruses—even if some are a little uneven—on *Blues For Some Bones*. Kai Winding and Willie Dennis also contribute inventive and contrasting solos. But although all the soloists produce some good jazz, each seems to run short of ideas after a time and be forced to fill in with clichés.

Perhaps the real star of the session is pianist John Lewis. His quiet, but not unemotional, playing succeeds in being original as well as satisfying. E.J.

### Tony Kinsey Quartet

\*\*\*China Boy (Winfree, Boutelle) (b); Stompin' At The Savoy (Sampson) (a)  
(Decca 78 F10708; 45 45F10708—5s. 7d.)  
Moonglow (Hudson, De Lange) (c)  
One O'clock Jump (Basie) (d)  
(Decca 78 F10709; 45 45F10709—5s. 7d.)

(a) (Decca DRX21654), (b) (do. 21655), (c) (do. 21656), (d) (do. 21657)—Kinsey (drs); Ronnie Ross (clt); Bill Le Sage (tbb); Dill Jones (pno); Eric Dawson (bass). 20/2/1956. London.

Four tunes from the film "The Benny Goodman Story"—three of them associated with the old B.G. Quartet—get less than adequate re-creation. Apart from Dill Jones, the soloists are very dull. Goodman, Wilson, Hampton, and Krupa were masters of intimate jazz; these imitators sound rather poor. E.J.

### \*Ladd's Black Aces

\*\*\*Aunt Hagar's Children's Blues (Handy) (a); Shake It And Break It (Friscoe, Clark) (b); My Honey's Lovin' Arms (J. Meyer) (c); Satanic Blues (L. Shields, E. Christian) (d); Muscle Shoal Blues (G. W. Thomas) (c); I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate (Piron) (f); Aggravatin' Papa (Turk, Britt, Robinson) (g); Sweet Lovin' Man (Wagner, Lockhard) (h)  
(London Origins Of Jazz LP AL3556—29s. 6j4d.)

(a) (Am. Gennett 7577), (b) (do. 7578)—Doc Berenson (clt); Jules Levy, Jr., or Phil Napoleon (tp); Miff Mole (tmb); Frank Signorelli (pno); possibly Sam Lanin (drs). August, 1921. New York.  
(c) (do. 7810), (d) (do. 7811)—Personnel as for (a). 19/3/1922. New York.  
(e) (do. 7832)—Personnel as for (a). 14/4/1922. New York.

(f) (do. 8006)—Jimmy Lytell (clt); Napoleon (tp); Mole or Vincent Grande (tmb); Signorelli (pno); Jack Roth (drs). 21/8/1922. New York.  
(g) (do. 8153), (h) (do. 8154)—Personnel as for (f). 12/12/1922. New York.

Ladd's Black Aces was a studio group that later became the Original Memphis Five, and the above personellens were verified by Phil Napoleon and Miff Mole through Jim Moynahan, the Boston reed man who knows everyone and has played with them all. A picture in the 1924 edition of the Gennett catalogue shows five Negroes holding appropriate instruments, but this is obviously a fake-up. The music is considerably more robust than the rather thin music of the later New York groups led by Red Nichols and Miff Mole. It stems more directly from the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, with some of their great enthusiasm weeded out and a greater technical facility substituted. The rhythms are more jerky though, especially in the later sides. All in all, this is a specialist issue; but if you happen to be an early-New York-style specialist, you may confidently add another star. O.K.

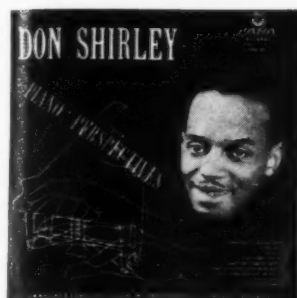
### \*Julie London

\*\*\*Say It Isn't So (Berlin); It Never Entered My Mind (Rodgers); Easy Street (Jones); My Wonderful (Gershwin); No Money At All (Evans, Mann); Laura (Raskin, Mercer); Gone With The Wind (Wrubel, Magidson); Cry Me A River (Hamilton); I Should Care (Cahn, Stordahl, Weston); I'm In The Mood For Love (McHugh, Fields); I'm Glad There Is You (Dorsey, Madara); I Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man (Kern, Hammerstein II); I Love You (Porter)  
(12 in. London LP HA-U2005—37s. 6j4d.)

(Am. Liberty, tape numbers NLRP3006-A, -B)—Julie London (voc) acc. by Barney Kessel (dr); Ray Leatherwood (bass). Circa early 1955. U.S.A.

Few vocalists make the grade for this column, but American Julie London has. All right, say it's as much her sexy voice as the jazz feel in the way she puts over ballads that has got me. You can even add that there are too many songs of the same mood, taken at too similar tempi, and I'll agree with it all. But get an earful (and, from the sleeve, an eyeful) of Miss London, and I'll bet that unless you're an iceberg or a catty female you'll be wanting to take her—I mean, of course, her record—home.

P.S.—I forgot to mention that the enlightened choice of just guitarist Barney Kessel and bassist



**Piano Perspectives—DON SHIRLEY**  
HAA 2003 (London)

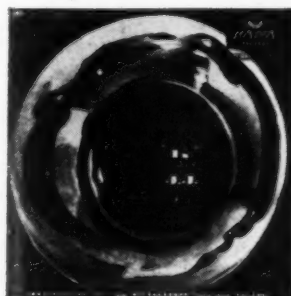
'I propose to stick my neck right out by saying that London HAA 2003 is one of the most fabulous records that has ever been submitted for review in the long history of this journal.'  
(*"Harlequin"* in *'The Gramophone'*)



**LOUIS ARMSTRONG at The Crescendo, Vols. 1 & 2**  
LAT 8084-5 (Brunswick)

'A wonderful set with more thrilling moments than I could possibly detail without commandeering a whole issue of GRR.'  
(*Mike Butcher* in *'The Gramophone Record Review'*)

'These seem to me to be among the finest (if not *the* finest) public recordings ever made by a jazz group.'  
(*Chris Barber* in *'Pop Records'*)



**Kai and Jay—**  
**KAY WINDING AND J. J. JOHNSON**  
LTZ-N 15003 (London Jazz Series)

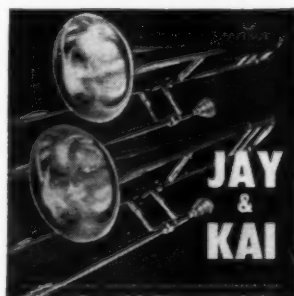
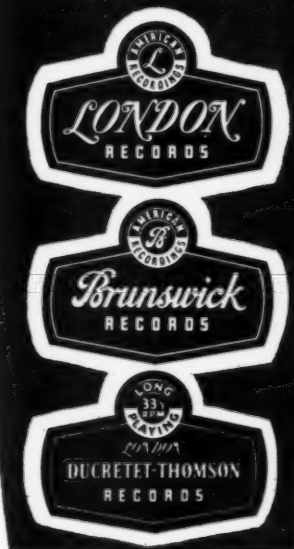
'An astounding record.'  
(*Albert McCarthy* in *'The Gramophone'*)

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Our choice has been more than justified by critical acclaim.



**Jay and Kai—J. J. JOHNSON AND KAY WINDING**  
LTZ-C 15007 (London Jazz Series)

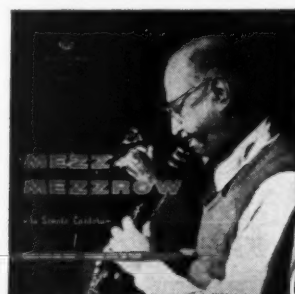
'Jay and Kai are two superb artists and the partnership seems to have brought out the best qualities in each.'

(*Edgar Jackson* in *'The Gramophone'*)



**Piano Solos—JESS STACY**  
LA 8737 (Brunswick)

'... he really ranks among the great undiscovered jazzmen. Seldom have I heard him to better advantage nor playing such a compatible selection of tunes from his old Chicago repertoire. Don't miss this!'  
(*Gerald Lascelles* in *'Jazz Journal'*)



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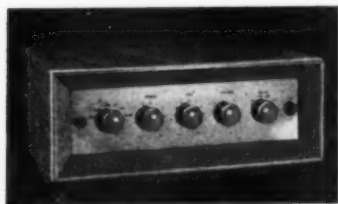


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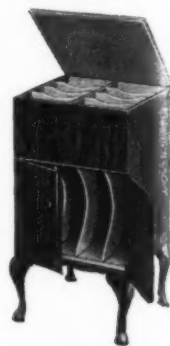
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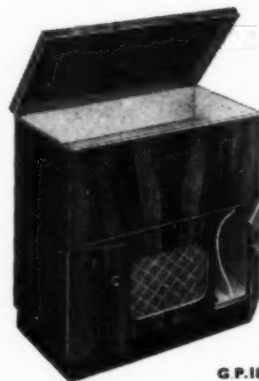
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### \*Charlie Mariano Sextet

\*\*\*Chlo-e (Kahn, Moret); Green Walls (Mariano); 'S Nice (Mariano); Three Little Words (Robby); You Go To My Head (Coots); Melancholy Baby (Norton, Burnett) (London LP LZ-N14032-29s. 64d.)

(Ann. Bethlehem, tape numbers TV22685f, TV22686f) —Mariano (alto); Stu Williamson (tp); Frank Rosolino (tmb); Claude Williamson (pno); Max Bennett (bass); Stan Levy (drs). 21/12/1954. Hollywood.

† These are Am. Columbia numbers, their studios having presumably been used for the recordings.

Except for the addition of Frank Rosolino, the musicians on this record are identical with those who played on the Stu Williamson LP I reviewed last month. The music is rather similar, too, except that Charlie Mariano's alto is featured to a much greater extent.

A Bostonian, Mariano worked with the Chubby Jackson-Bill Harris unit in 1953, then joined Stan Kenton's orchestra. During the past few years he has stayed on the West Coast. On the evidence of this record he has talent, but no more than that. He never surprises with an unexpected turn of phrase. His best solo is on the slow ballad, *You Go To My Head*.

Frank Rosolino and both the Williamsons play with their usual neat stylishness. Once again Stan Levy drums well. Nothing is radically wrong with this music, but it just doesn't say anything particularly worth while, let alone new. E.J.

### \*Mezz Mezzrow

\*\*\*Milton 'Mezz' Mezzrow at the Schola Cantorum "Blues With A Bridge (Blues Avec Un Pont) (Mezzrow) (a); Minor With A Bridge (Minor Avec Un Pont) (Mezzrow) (b) (12 in. London Ducret-Thomson LP TKL93092 —39s. 74d.)

(a) (French Ducret-Thomson LDG408), (b) (do. LDG409)—Mezzrow (cl); Peanuts Holland, Guy Longdon (tr); Milton Searley (pno); Kansas Fields (drs). 20/5/1955. Paris.

A long but by no means boring blues disc, played with taste and refinement that are rare these days. Mezz has seldom sounded better, though a little under-recorded. The two trumpets in their long soli are fine blues exponents, and the two rhythm men give a sympathetic support. I could have done without Fields' drum solo at the end of the *Minor* side, but Holland's derby-muted work is a joy, recalling Joe Smith and Bix at their best. The sleeve-note is also finely and intelligently written. O.K.

### \*Mezzrow-Bechet Quintet/Septet

\*\*\*Really The Blues Nos. 1 and 2 (f); Jelly Roll (a); Gone Away Blues (g); Funky Butt (h); I Want Some (m); Blood On The Moon (V by Lips Page) (b); Ole Miss (c); Bowlin' The Blues (d); House Party (e); Old School (f); Tommy's Blues (i); De Luxe Stomp (h); Out Of The Gallow (i). (All Mezzrow-Bechet) (12 in. Vogue LP LAE12017—38s. 3d.)

(a) (Am. King Jazz KJ-12), (b) (do. -16)—Bechet (sop); Mezzrow (cl); Oran 'Hot Lips' Page (tp); Sam Price (Jimmy Blythe, Jr.) (pno); Danny Barker (tr); George 'Pops' Foster (bass); Sid Catlett (drs). 30/7/1945. U.S.A. (c) (do. -25), (d) (do. -28), (e) (do. -27), (f) (do. -29), (g) (do. -30), (h) (do. -31), (i) (do. -32)—Bechet (sop); Mezzrow (cl); Fitts Weston (pno); Foster (bass); Kaiser Marshall (trs). 22 and 30/8/1945. (j) (do. -34, -35)—Bechet (sop, cl); Mezzrow (cl); Wesley 'Sax' Wilson (pno); Wellman Braud (bass); Baby Dodds (trs). 18/9/1946. U.S.A. (k) (do. -43), (l) (do. -44), (m) (do. -47)—Bechet (sop); Mezzrow (cl); Price (pno); Foster (bass); Marshall (trs). 18/12/1947. U.S.A.

This is not revivalist music; it is the continuation of something that, in the hands of the men responsible, never died. Mezz and Bechet work here like truly inspired artists, and there is no doubt that these tracks present some of the greatest jazz ever recorded since the end of the first great jazz era in the early 'thirties. Simple, but beautifully conceived music of no school of jazz thought, and never rising to violent

crescendo, or slackening into boredom, this record knocks one more nail in the coffin of the idea that jazz is speed, noise and vulgarity. I would urge all jazz lovers to buy it. O.K.

### \*"Midnight At Nixa"

\*\*\*Bugle Blues (Basie) (a); Don't Worry 'Bout Me (Bloom) (e); I Can't Give You Anything But Love (takes 1 and 2) (McHugh) (c); Jive At Five (Basie) (b); Truckin' (Bloom) (a); It Had To Be You (Jones, Kahn) (f); Tea For Two (Youmans) (d); Blues Any Friday (K. Baker) (e); It Don't Mean A Thing (Ellington) (e) (12 in. Nixa Jazz Today LP NJL3—35s. 14d.)

(Nixa, tape numbers TT1003-A-2, -B-1) (a)—Bruce Turner (alto); Kenny Baker (tp); Derek Smith (pno); Frankie Clarke (bass); Phil Seamen (trs). 16/1/1956. London. (b)—Baker (tp); Smith (pno); Clarke (bass); Seamen (trs). Same session. (c)—Personnel as for (b). 20/2/1956. London. (d)—Bertie King, Turner (altos); Smith (pno); Clarke (bass); Seamen (trs). Same session. (e)—Turner (alto); Baker (tp); Smith (pno); Major Holley (bass); Don Lawson (trs). 23/3/1956. London. (f)—Smith (pno); Holley (bass). Same session.

Although it features the same kind of jazz, this is a far better record than "Mainstream at Nixa" reviewed last month. There are no dull tracks; everyone plays with vitality and to some purpose. Kenny Baker has sometimes been guilty of flamboyance, but here he executes some of the most tasteful and intelligent solos I have heard him play. The two takes of *Anything But Love* (the second cunningly tinged with *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart*) show how differently he can approach a theme.

Bruce Turner shines on most tracks, notably *Don't Worry 'Bout Me* and *Truckin'*. On *Tea For Two* he is joined by Bertie King, the two alto players sharing a duet and providing an intriguing contrast of styles. The rhythm section plays well throughout, Derek Smith contributing many excellent and extremely individual solos. E.J.

### \*Jelly Roll Morton

\*\*\*King Porter Stomp (Morton) (a); New Orleans Joys (Morton) (b); Wolverine Blues (Morton) (c); London Blues (Morton) (e); Froggie Moore (Spikes Bros.) (d); Jelly Roll Blues (Morton) (h); Mamamitt (Morton) (g); Tina Juana (Rosenheim, Conley) (f) (London Origins Of Jazz LP AL3550—29s. 64d.)

(a) (Am. Gennett 11537), (b) (do. 11538)—Morton (pno). 17/7/1923. Richmond, Indiana, U.S.A. (c) (do. 11546)—Morton (pno). 18/7/1923. Richmond U.S.A. (d) (Am. Autograph 534) (e) (do. (for Am. Rialto) 535)—Morton (pno). Circa May, 1924. Chicago. (f) (Am. Gennett 11907), (g) (do. 11910), (h) (do. 11911)—Morton (pno). 9/6/1924. Richmond, U.S.A. † Correct title *Mama 'Nita*.

The remainder of the Morton piano soli available to London are presented here in capsule form. They give a most delightful period of listening of the sort that never palls, so great is Morton's exquisite artistry, and despite the acoustic recording, which is nevertheless kind to Jelly.

*Mamamita* was correctly titled *Mama 'Nita* by way of dedication to Anita Gonzales, one of Morton's many lady friends. It is an attractive number with a strong Spanish tinge of which Morton thought so much. The others are fairly well-known to jazz enthusiasts. In particular I would recommend *New Orleans Joys* as a truly exceptional example of how graceful and utterly charming jazz can be. A great record by a great man. O.K.

### \*Gerry Mulligan Sextet

\*\*\*Mud Bug (Jerry Lloyd); Sweet And Lovely (Armstrong); Apple Core (Mulligan); Nights At The Turntable (Mulligan); Broadway (Wood, McRae, Bird); Everything Happens To Me (Adair, Dennis); The Lady Is A Tramp (Rodgers); Bernice's Tune (Bernie Miller) (12 in. EmArcy LP EJL101—26s. 5d.)

(Am. EmArcy, tape numbers MRCLP-12-1001-A-1, -B-1)—Mulligan (bar); Zoot Sims (tr); Jon Eardley (tp); Bob Brookmeyer (valve-tmb, pno);

Peck Morrison (bass); Dave Bailey (drs). Circa late 1955. U.S.A.

Last month I reviewed the Gerry Mulligan Quartet recording made at the Paris Jazz Fair of 1954. Here is the first EmArcy release of his new Sextet. Two more solo voices added to the front-line give greater tonal contrast, and Mr. Mulligan breaks his piano-less jazz precedent by bringing in Bob Brookmeyer on the instrument in *Everything Happens*. But the rhythm section is weaker—lacking the redoubtable Red Mitchell.

The music on side 1 is intricate and thoughtful, but perhaps a shade too carefully considered, for at times it becomes a little dull. The remaining four tracks have the soloists swinging fairly freely on standard tunes.

Zoot Sims impresses most. He takes first-class solos in *The Lady Is A Tramp* and *Broadway* (a tune that echoes the riff in *Moten Swing*). Mulligan's leisurely and sensitive performance of *Everything Happens* is well backed up by bass and drums. Jon Eardley, whom I mentioned a month or two ago when reviewing a Phil Woods record, can be crisp and biting as well as cool. Brookmeyer plays his trombone with his customary good taste and technical mastery. E.J.

### \*Turk Murphy's Jazz Band

\*\*\*Down By The Riverside (Trad.) (V by Murphy and Ensemble); Storyville Blues (Trad.); After You've Gone (Creamer, Layton) (V by Murphy); Canal Street Blues (Oliver); A Closer Walk With Thee (Trad.); Ory's Creole Trombone (Ory); St. James Infirmary (Primrose) (V by Murphy); By And By (Trad.) (Good Time Jazz LP LDG180—29s. 64d.)

(Am. Good Time Jazz, tape numbers LKLP-9, -10)—Murphy (tmb); Bill Napier (cl); Don Kinch (tp); Skippy Anderson (pno); Pat Patton (bjo); George Burns (bass, tuba); Stan Ward (trs). 8/5/1950. U.S.A. Previous issues: *By And By* and *St. James Infirmary* Good Time Jazz GV2180.

Quite competent Dixieland with a crisp tuba and a strong, gruff tailgate trombone-leader who sings like Nat Gonella, lipped r's and all. Napier plays a fluent, if unexciting clarinet, and the whole effect is one of pleasantly relaxed music that doesn't create anything new out of hackneyed tunes. O.K.

### \*"New Orleans Horns—Vol. 2"

\*\*\*King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band: Alligator Hop (Oliver) (b); Krokodile Blues (Spikes Bros., Dink Johnson) (c); I'm Going Away To Wear Off My Mind (Smith) (a) \*\*\*Freddy Keppard Jazz Cardinals: Salty Dog (Charlie Jackson) (h)

\*\*\*Doc Cook's Dreamland Orchestra: The Memphis Maybe Man (H. Gillespie, Cook Moll) (f); So This Is Venice (Clark, Leslie Warren) (e); The One I Love (Jones) (g); Scissor Grinder Joe (H. Gillespie, Stocco) (d) (London Origins Of Jazz LP AL3557—29s. 64d.)

(a) (Am. Gennett 11386)—Oliver (cornet); Johnny Dodds (cl); Louis Armstrong (cornet); Honore Dutrey (tmb); Lil Hardin (pno); Bill Johnson (bjo); Baby Dodds (trs). 31/8/1923. Richmond, Indiana, U.S.A. (b) (do. 11633), (c) (do. 11638)—Personnel as for (a), except add Stump Evans (C-mel. sax); Johnny St. Cyr (bjo) replaces Johnson. 5/10/1923. Richmond, U.S.A. (d) (do. 11727), (e) (do. 11729), (f) (do. 11731), (g) (do. 11732)—Cook (leader); Jimmy Noone (cl); Clifford King, Joe Poston (altos); Jerome Pasquall (tr); Elwood Graham, Freddie Keppard (cornets); Fred Gariand (tmb); Jimmy Bell (sn); Tony Spaulding (pno); Bill Newton (tuba); Bert Green (trs). 21/1/1924. Richmond, U.S.A. (h) (Am. Paramount 2653)—Keppard (cornet); Johnny Dodds (cl); Eddie Vincent (tmb); Arthur Campbell (pno); Jasper Taylor (wood block). September, 1926. Chicago.

This is another of those issues that suggests scraping the bottom of the barrel (figuratively, not listenably!). In it we find three more King Oliver titles (none of them quite as great as the others he did on Gennett, but great jazz nevertheless); another "take" of a fine Keppard (where the great New Orleans cornet pioneer is heard without the clutter of a big band); and four sides by Doc Cook on which



Keppard is audible, very much with the afore-said clutter. I think, though, that so little is known to exist on discs of this legendary man's work, that anything on which he can be heard at all is surely worth preserving, however dull the background. I think, too, from experience of the better recorded and later Columbias, that had the recording here been better, and the material less obviously aimed at the "pop" market, we might have had a much better result. This is an interesting record, but just misses greatness. O.K.

### \*Charlie Parker

\*\*\*Begin The Beguine (Porter) (d); Estrellita (Trad.) (c); My Little Suede Shoes (Trad.) (a); La Cucuracha (Trad.) (b)  
(Columbia-Clef EP SEB10032—11s. 11d.)

(a) (Am. Mercury C540-6)—Parker (alto); Walter Bishop, Jr. (pno); Teddy Kotick (bass); Roy Haynes (d); Jose Manguel (bongos); Luis Miranda (conga dm). 12/3/1951. New York.  
(b) (do. C680-3), (c) (do. C681-5)—Parker (alto); Benny Harris (tp); Bishop (pno); Kotick (bass); Max Roach (d); Miranda (conga dm). 28/1/1952. New York.  
(d) (do. C682-3)—Personnel as for (b), minus Harris. Same session.

Few Charlie Parker records do not achieve the authentic stamp of the great jazz artist. Even when subdued—as he is here, playing close to the melodies above Latin-American rhythms—Parker's personality comes over with the very first note. Benny Harris (a highly thought of trombonist during the bop era) doesn't sound quite at ease in this exotic setting, but pianist Walter Bishop, Jr., solo's very capably. E.J.

### \*André Previn

\*\*\*Let's Get Away From It All (Dennis) (a); Moonlight In Vermont (Karl Suessdorf) (b); It Happened In Sun Valley (Warren) (b); Serenade To Sweden (Ellington) (f); Island In The West Indies (Duke) (c); Flying Down To Rio (Youmans) (f); Honolulu (Warren) (f); How Are Things In Glocca Morra? (Lane) (c); On A Slow Boat To China (Loesser) (d); London In July (Duke) (g); San Francisco (Kahn et al) (e); Side-walks Of Cuba (Oakland) (i)  
(12 in. Brunswick LP LAT8093—37s. 6½d.)

(a) (Am. Decca L8316), (b) (do. L8317), (c) (do. L8318), (d) (do. L8319)—Previn (pno); Al Hendrickson (gtr); Red Mitchell (bass); Irv Cottler (d). 11/4/1955. U.S.A.  
(e) (do. L8320), (f) (do. L8329), (g) (do. L8330), (h) (do. L8331)—Same personnel. 13/4/1955. U.S.A.  
(i) (do. L8336), (j) (do. L8337), (k) (do. L8338), (l) (do. L8339)—Same personnel. 18/4/1955. U.S.A.

Very nimble, very adroit piano jazz, but without much feeling or swing. André Previn, still only 26 years old, has soloed with the Chicago and Boston Symphony orchestras and at 21 was the youngest musical director in Hollywood. Not surprisingly, his playing reflects the brilliance and diversity of his schooling and experience. Taken as "cocktail piano" this music has its merits, but judged by harsher standards it must be admitted that, although he has acquired an understanding of the modern idea, Previn does nothing very original, and a 12-inch LP magnifies his deficiencies. Most interesting of the tracks is the performance of Duke Ellington's little-known *Serenade To Sweden*. Red Mitchell is outstanding in a first-class rhythm team. E.J.

### \*Paul Quinichette

\*\*\*The Hook (Quinichette) (c); Samie (Quinichette) (d); Shadroe (Quinichette) (a); Crew Cut (J. Collins) (b)  
(EmArcy EP ERE1502—11s. 1½d.)

(a) (Am. EmArcy 4815), (b) (do. 4817), (c) (do. 4818), (d) (do. 4819)—Quinichette (tr); Buck Clayton (tp); Dickie Wells (tmb); Count Basie (organ, pno); Freddy Green (gtr); Walter Page (bass); Gus Johnson (d). 1952. U.S.A.

Paul Quinichette was with Count Basie's orchestra when these tracks were recorded, and all the musicians taking part have played in Basie's band at one time or another.

*The Hook* and *Samie* have Quinichette alone with the rhythm section behind him, Basie

switching to organ on the latter title. With tone and style close to Lester Young's (his nickname is "The Vice-Pres"), Quinichette overflows with ideas and swings powerfully. Dickie Wells takes forthright solos on the two other tracks, including a "chase" chorus with Quinichette. This is jazz at its best, relaxed and intimate. E.J.

### Freddy Randall and his Band

\*\*\*Ain't Misbehavin' (Waller) (b)  
\*\*Ja Da (Carleton) (a)  
(Parlophone R4191—5s. 7d.)

(a) (Parlophone CE15451)—Randall (tp); Al Gay (cl); Betty Smith (tr); Orme Stewart (tmb); Harry Smith (pno); Jack Peberdy (bass); Stan Bourke (d). 5/10/1955. London.  
(b) (do. CE15542)—Personnel as for (a), except Eddie Thompson (pno) replaces Smith. 20/2/1956. London.

Since these sides were recorded, Freddy Randall's band has made a triumphant tour of the United States in exchange for Louis Armstrong's All Stars coming to Britain. Randall's girl tenorist, Betty Smith, made a big hit on the other side of the Atlantic, and certainly she is easily the best soloist on this record. Apart from her, these are bright, run-of-the-mill Dixieland performances, of no particular distinction. E.J.

### \*Bud Shank Quintet

\*\*\*Shank's Pranks; Casa De Luz; Lotus Bud; Left Bank; Jasmine; Just A Few (All Shorty Rogers) (All a)

### Bud Shank-Bill Perkins Quintet

\*\*\*Paradise (Brown, Clifford); Fluted Columns (Shank); I Hear Music (Loesser, Lane); Royal Garden Blues (S. and C. Williams); A Sinner Kissed An Angel (Joseph, David); It Had To Be You (Kahn, Jones) (All b)  
(12 in. Vogue LP LAE12020—38s. 3d.)

(a) (Am. Nocturne, catalogue number NLP2)—Shank (alto, flute); Shorty Rogers (tp, flugel horn); Jimmy Rowles (pno); Harry Babasin (bass); Roy Harte (d). Circa early 1954. U.S.A.  
(b) (Am. Pacific Jazz, no numbers available)—Shank (alto, bar, flute); Perkins (tr, flute); Hampton Hawes (pno); Red Mitchell (bass); Mel Lewis (d). Circa Spring, 1955. U.S.A.  
Note: *It Had To Be You* and *Royal Garden Blues* available also on Vogue V2376.

Six Shorty Rogers compositions comprise the Bud Shank Quintet side. This is clever, ingenious music with good solos by Shank, Rogers and pianist Jimmy Rowles. But it is the other side which offers the most stimulating jazz.

Many British jazz fans saw both Bill Perkins and Mel Lewis when the Stan Kenton band was over here. Perkins's tenor fits perfectly alongside Shank's alto and baritone. The two even play a lively flute duet in *Fluted Columns*. Behind them Red Mitchell's superb bass-playing swings the whole group, while Hampton Hawes shows that he is one of the best up-and-coming pianists. West Coast enthusiasts could easily add another star to each side.

A pity Vogue put this record inside such a confusing sleeve. The fronts of two entirely separate covers, put back to back, seem to have been used, providing no space for the usual sleeve notes (which doesn't matter) or proper details of who plays what, which certainly does matter—or at any rate would if it weren't for the energy of yours truly in sorting things out for you! E.J.

### \*Derek Smith Trio

\*\*\*Any Questions? (Smith); Silverside (Smith); Blue Concept (Gryce); Cutie (Smith)  
(Nixa Jazz Today EP NJE1018—11s. 10d.)

(Nixa, tape numbers UUI018-A, -B)—Smith (pno); Sammy Stokes (bass); Allan Ganley (d). 20/1/1956. London.

Well-known for his work with Johnny Dankworth's orchestra and more recently as a member of the New Jazz Group, Derek Smith is one of the most gifted British pianists. This record shows his quality. Admirably backed up by Allan Ganley and Sammy Stokes, he performs three of his own originals (*Silverside* is

dedicated to Horace Silver, Derek's favourite pianist) and Gigi Gryce's *Blue Concept*. This is fluent and intelligent piano playing. E.J.

### \*Willie "The Lion" Smith

\*\*\*Don't You Hit That Lady Dressed In Green (Trad.); Maple Leaf Rag (Joplin); Don't You Dare To Strike Me Again (Bob Hawkins); Shine (Dabney); Dark Town Strutters' Ball (Brooks); Pork And Beans (Roberts); Chevy Chase (Eubie Blake); Oh You Devil Rag (Dabney); When I Walk With Billy (Trad.); Buddy Bolden's Blues (Morton); Passionette (Smith)  
(Vogue LP LDE177—29s. 6½d.)

(French Jazz Disques, master numbers MS-11, -12)—Smith (pno). Circa 1950. Paris.

When I set out to review this, I thought maybe the venerable "Lion" was going to do a Jelly Roll Morton and give us interesting little snapshots of the men he had known, with impressions of their styles. Actually, all that happens is a series of abbreviated piano soli which sound very much like "The Lion's" hard-hitting style all through. His attempt at Morton's style is a pitiful caricature; the opening number is about twice as fast as rag-time should be, and in many of the tunes the soloist comments unintelligibly, or hums and grunts a kind of obbligato which is most distracting. Vladimir de Pachmann could get away with this, but not Willie Smith. I checked on Lucky Roberts' *Pork And Beans* against "The Lion's" version, and found precious little similarity. The most relaxed performance is that of Eubie Blake's *Chevy Chase*.

"The Lion's" comments are half in English, telling us little, and half in French, telling us nothing. There are eight mistakes on the label too: (1) Jazz Disquis for Disques; (2) and (3) Dabrey (twice) for Dabney; (4) apostrophe missing from Strutters'; (5) Area, presumably for Circa; (6) apostrophe missing from Bolden's; (7) Shilton for Shelton; (8) Luibey (Roberts) for Lucky. A pity! O.K.

### \*Jess Stacy

\*\*\*Fascinating Rhythm (Gershwin) (b); I Can't Get Started (Duke); I Want To Be Happy (Youmans) (d); You Took Advantage Of Me (Rodgers) (a); Indiana (Hanley) (e); Stars Fell On Alabama (Parish) (f); Oh, Baby (Owen Murphy) (k); If I Could Be With You (Creamer, Johnson) (g)  
(Brunswick LP LA8737—25s. 0½d.)

(a) (Am. Decca L6158), (b) (do. L6159), (c) (do. L6160), (d) (do. L6161)—Stacy (pno); George Van Eps (gtr); Morty Corb (bass); Nick Fatool (d). 16/3/1951. U.S.A.  
(e) (do. L6227), (f) (do. L6228), (g) (do. L6229), (h) (do. L6230)—Personnel as for (a). 4/10/1951. U.S.A.

### \*Jess Stacy and the Famous Sidemen

\*\*\*Let's Dance (Stone, Bonime, Baldrick) (b); King Porter Stomp (Morton) (b); Where Or When? (Rodgers) (b); Gee, Ain't I Good To You (Redman) (a); When Buddha Smiles (Freed, Brown, Zany) (c); I Must Have That Man (McHugh) (a); Roll 'Em (M. L. Williams) (b); Don't Be That Way (Sampons) (c); Blues For Otis Ferguson (Stacy) (a); Sometimes I'm Happy (Youmans) (e); Sing, Sing, Sing (Prima) (b); You Turned The Tables On Me (Mitchell, Alter) (a); Down South Camp Meeting (Henderson) (c); Goodbye (Jenkins) (b)  
(12 in. London LP LTZ-K15012—37s. 6½d.)

(Am. Atlantic, tape numbers 11343, 11344).  
(a)—Stacy (pno); Artie Shapiro (bass); Nick Fatool (d).

(b)—Stacy (pno); Heinie Beau (alto); Vido Musso (tr); Charles "Chuck" Gentry (bar); Ziggy Elman (tp); Murray McEachern (tmb); Allan Reuss (gtr); Artie Shapiro (bass); Fatool (d).  
(c)—Stacy (pno); Beau (alto); Babe Russin (tr); Joe Koch (bar); Ziggy Elman (tp); Ted Vesley (tmb); Al Hendrickson (gtr); Morty Corb (bass); Fatool (d). All mid-1955. Hollywood.

Fifty-two-year-old, Missouri-born Jess Stacy, from 1935 to 1939 pianist with Benny Goodman's first big band, subsequently with Bob Crosby and later still leader of his own band, this month flashes back out of the blue in two more or less contrasting roles and shows himself





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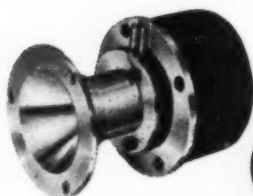
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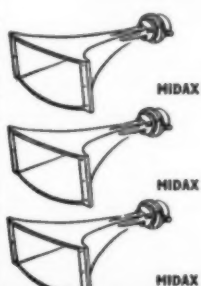
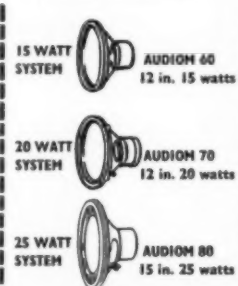
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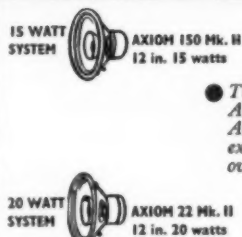
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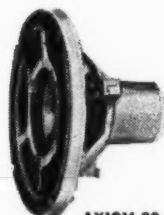
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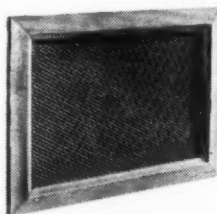
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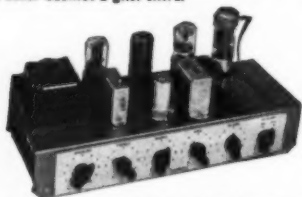
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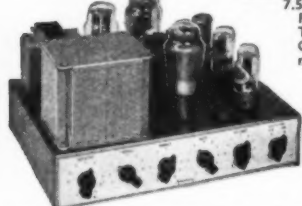
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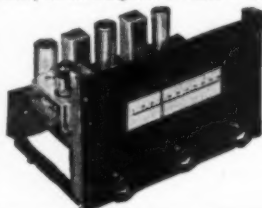


Both the above model Amplifiers are available with all controls on a separate Control Panel with up to 4 feet flexible cable which simply plugs into the amplifier. Enables the Amplifier proper to be sat in the bottom of a cabinet whilst the controls are mounted conveniently higher up. Extra cost 2 gns.

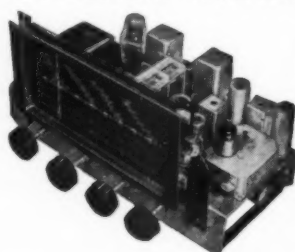
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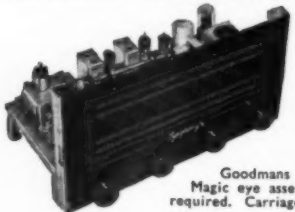


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in both to be still one of the best mainstream jazz keyboard men.

His first rôle is as a soloist, playing eight standards. In all of them he reveals a crisp touch and excellent phrasing as he drives along with power and ideas which always sound fresh. Attractive guitar solos by another stalwart from the mid-period, George Van Eps, help to make this an unusually satisfying record.

The second (12 in.) disc is sub-titled "Tribute to Benny Goodman" and, despite a generous sprinkling of solos, presents Stacy as a group leader, playing in appropriately suitable style favourites from the Goodman book. They were all featured in the film "The Goodman Story". In fact this is about the one record inspired by the film in which Goodman himself doesn't play. Having Stacy instead as the bandleader is doubly ironical, for, although booked for the film, he never took part in it. He walked out when he found he would have only one number to play.

Best tracks of the set are those marked (b) in the above list of titles, which have just Stacy with Artie Shapiro's bass and Nick Fatool's drums. The band sounds a bit small for some of the other arrangements, but the soloists do well, Ziggy Elman being outstanding.

The entrancing *Blues For Otis Ferguson* is in memory of the jazz critic of the American "New Republic"—one of the best ever to grace the U.S. lay press. I regret to say he was killed in the war.

And if this review doesn't tempt you to get the record, take a look at the elfin sprite on the sleeve. She will!

E.J.

#### Ralph Sutton Quartet

**\*\*Sweet And Lovely** (Arnheim) (b)  
**\*\*Up Jumped You With Love** (Waller, Kirkeby) (a)  
(Brunswick 78 05564; 45 45.05564—6s.)  
(a) (Am. Decca 85851), (b) (do. 85852)—Sutton (pno); **Edmond Hall** (clt); **Walter Page** (bass); **Cliff Leeman** (drs). 10/2/1954. New York.

Ralph Sutton has for long been one of my favourite Dixieland-style pianists, but this record has sadly disappointed me. Maybe it's less because of Sutton and more because, although the record is put out under his name, Edmond Hall is just as prominent. Not that I haven't always thought Hall a good jazz clarinetist. But he isn't at his best here, nor does he seem to fit with Sutton. Anyway Sutton doesn't need any such assistance. He is best alone, or, with, at the most, just bass and drums.

E.J.

#### \*Geoff Taylor All Stars

**\*\*Sweet Sue** (Young) (a); **Sweet Lorraine** (Burwell, Parish) (b); **Sweet Eloise** (Morgan, David) (c); **Sweet Georgia Brown** (Bernie, Pinkard, Casey) (d)  
(Esquire LP 20-060—29s. 6jd.)  
(a) (Esquire EEP-819-1), (b) (do. -820-2), (c) (do. -821-2)—Taylor (alto); **Martin Slavin** (vib); **David Lee** (pno); **Jimmy Currie** (gtr); **Bill Sutcliffe** (bass); **Kenny Clare** (drs). 24/10/1955. London.  
(d) (do. -822-3)—Personnel as for (a), minus Slavin. Same session.  
Previous issues: (a) and (b) Esquire EP105.

Not so very long ago I severely criticised some of Geoff Taylor's recordings because of the way he aped Earl Bostic's rasping tone without possessing Bostic's primary merit—his tremendous drive. But those gruesome days are past and I am happy to praise Mr. Taylor's playing on this new release.

"Sweet Suite", as this LP is called (all the tunes celebrate sweet young things), shows why, two years ago, a panel of "Melody Maker" critics (your humble included) selected Geoff Taylor as the most promising alto saxist among the younger musicians. Apart from his swinging, tasteful solos, there is some delightful vibes playing by Martin Slavin. David Lee contributes brittle but lively piano choruses and there are pleasant guitar solos by Jimmy Currie.

E.J.

#### \*Sir Charles Thompson and his Band

**\*\*\*It's The Talk Of The Town** (Symes, Neuburg, Levinson); **Fore** (Thompson); **Dynaford** (Thompson); **Under The Sweetheart Tree** (Thompson); **Ready For Freddie** (Thompson)  
(Vanguard LP PPT12011—26s. 5d.)

(Am. Vanguard, tape numbers SS1011-A1, -B1)—Thompson (pno); **Earl Warren** (alto); **Coleman Hawkins** (clm); **Emmett Berry** (tp); **Benny Morton** (tmb); **Steve Jordan** (gtr); **Aaron Bell** (bass); **Osie Johnson** (drs). Circa late 1954.

It's *The Talk Of The Town* has always been one of Coleman Hawkins most famous solos, ever since he first recorded it with Fletcher Henderson's orchestra in 1933. The version here, together with *Under The Sweetheart Tree*—both tracks virtually tenor saxophone solos with accompaniment—shows him at his best. Playing with a full, rich tone, he creates flowing, lyrical inventions in an unhurried, masterly fashion.

Outstanding solos on other tracks, apart from Hawkins's (he disappoints only in *Fore*), come from the gruffly casual trombone of Benny Morton and Emmett Berry's tight, swinging trumpet. Earl Warren, for many years Count Basie's lead alto, takes some interesting choruses, while Sir Charles Thompson contributes economical, Basie-styled piano-work. The fine rhythm team includes Osie Johnson, who plays a long drum solo in *Fore*!

E.J.

### 78s REISSUED ON LPs

**\*Jimmie Lunceford and his Orchestra—For Dancers Only** (Sy Oliver) (f); **Organ Grinder's Swing** (Hudson) (e); **Sleepy Time Gal** (Whiting) (b); **Dream Of You** (Oliver) (V by Sy Oliver) (a); **Down By The Old Mill Stream** (Taylor) (V by Dan Grissom) (g); **Sweet Sue** (Young) (V by Sy Oliver) (h); **Four Or Five Times** (Byron Gay) (V by Sy Oliver) (c); **Charmaine** (Rapee) (V by Dan Grissom) (d). Brunswick LA8738—25s. 0jd.  
Previous issues: (a) Brunswick 02948, with "Call It Anything"; (b) 02297, with "Avalon"; (c) 02758, with "Rose Room"; (d) 02983, with "Jealous"; (e) 02288, with "Me And The Moon"; (f) 02531, with "Ragging The Scale"; (g) and (h) 02635.  
All other details on sleeve.

#### \*Fats Waller

**\*\*\*I Wish I Were Twins** (De Lange, Loesser, Meyer) (V) (b); **A Porter's Love Song** (Johnson, Razaf) (V) (a); **Have A Little Dream On Me** (Rose, Murray, Baxter) (V) (f); **Georgia May** (Denniker, Razaf) (V) (d); **Arnold O' Sweetness** (Hill) (V) (c); **Sweetie Pie** (Loeb) (V) (h); **Serenade For A Wealthy Widow** (Foreythe) (g); **Let's Pretend There's A Moon** (Colombo, Hamilton, Stern) (V) (j); **Mandy** (Berlin) (V) (i); **Then I'll Be Tired Of You** (Schwartz, Harburg) (V) (e) (All V's by Waller)  
(H.M.V. LP DLP1118—29s. 5d.)

(a) (Am. Victor 82526), (b) (do. 82527), (c) (do. 82528)—Waller (pno, vib in a); **Ben Whitte** (clt, alto); **Herman Autry** (tp); **Al Casey** (gtr); **Billy Taylor** (bass); **Harry Dial** (drs). 16/5/1934. U.S.A.  
(d) (do. 83699), (e) (do. 84106), (f) (do. 84108)—Personnel as for (a), except **Cedric** (clt, tr) replaces Whitte. 17/8/1934. U.S.A.  
(g) (do. 84417), (h) (do. 84419), (i) (do. 84420), (j) (do. 84421)—Waller (pno); **Mezz Mezzrow** (clt, alto); **Autry** (tp); **Floyd O'Brien** (tmb); **Casey** (gtr); **Taylor** (bass); **Dial** (drs). 28/9/1934. New York.  
Previous issues: (a) H.M.V. JFI, with *The Minor Drag*; (c) JF7, with *Do Me A Favour*; (d) JF12, with *Don't Let It Bother You*; (e) and (f) JF13; (g) and (h) JF8; (i) JF11, with *African Ripples*; (j) JF14, with *How Can You Face Me*?

The usual irrepressible and irresistible Fats Need one say more?

E.J.

#### \*Tommy Whittle Orchestra

**\*\*\*Lester Leaps In** (Young) (b); **Jive At Five** (Edison) (c); **Laura** (Mercer) (a); **How High The Moon** (Lewis) (d); **Just One Of Those Things** (Porter) (e); **Autumn In New York** (Duke) (f); **I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart** (Ellington) (h); **Don't Get Scared** (Getz) (g)  
(Esquire LP 20-061—29s. 0jd.)

(a) (Esquire ESQ-823-2), (b) (do. -824-3), (c) (do. -825-3), (d) (do. -826-1)—Whittle (tr); **Ronnie Baker**

(alto); **Joe Temperley** (bar); **Ken Wheeler** (tp); **Keith Christie** (tmb); **Don Riddell** (pno); **Freddie Logan** (bass); **Eddie Taylor** (drs). 9/11/1955. London.  
(e) (do. -842-3), (f) (do. -843-2), (g) (do. -844-1), (h) (do. -845-1)—Same personnel. 22/3/1956. London.  
Note: (a) and (c) available also on Esquire 10-474; (b) and (d) do. 10-468; (e) and (h) do. 10-481.

Attractive, swinging jazz by one of the best British bands of the moment, with just a tinge of the West Coast tone in its arrangements. Solo-playing is the strength of the group, Tommy Whittle himself taking the main honours. *Just One Of Those Things*, *Lester Leaps In* and a rhapsodic *Laura* show that he has listened to Lester Young with profit and then added a great deal of his own.

A "battle" between tenor and baritone saxes makes *How High The Moon* an exciting track. Keith Christie is inventive on both valve and slide trombones. *Autumn In New York* makes a subdued vehicle for Ken Wheeler's lyrical trumpet; Eddie Taylor reminds us that he is one of the more effective British drummers.

E.J.

#### \*Lester Young

**\*\*\*New Lester Leaps In** (Young) (b); **She's Funny That Way** (Whiting) (b); **Lester's Be Bop Boogie** (Young) (b); **You're Driving Me Crazy** (Donaldson) (b); **D. B. Blues** (Young) (a); **Lester Blows Again** (Young) (a); **The Sheik Of Araby** (Snyder, Smith) (d); **Something To Remember You By** (Whiton) (d); **Tea For Two** (Youmans) (d); **East Of The Sun** (Bowman) (d); **After You've Gone** (Creamer, Layton) (c); **I'm Confessin'** (Neiburg, Dougherty) (e)  
(12 in. Vogue LP LAE12016—38s. 3d.)  
**\*\*\*Stardust** (Carmichael) (f); **Conesula** (Neiburg, Dougherty) (f); **These Foolish Things** (Maschwitz) (f); **I Can't Give You Anything But Love** (McHugh) (f); **Lester Swings** (Young) (h); **Count Every Star** (Coquatrix, Gallop) (g); **It All Depends On You** (De Sylva, Brown, Henderson) (g); **September In The Rain** (Dubin, Warren) (g); **Pete's Cafe** (Young) (h); **Slow Motion Blues** (Young) (h)  
(12 in. Columbia-Clef LP 33CX10031—39s. 7jd.)

(a) (Am. Aladdin, no numbers available)—Young (tr); **Vic Dickenson** (tmb); **Dodo Marmarosa** (pno); **Freddie Green** (gtr); **Red Callender** (bass); **Henry "Tucker" Green** (drs). December, 1945. Hollywood.

(b) (do., do.)—Young (tr); **Joe Albany** (pno); **Irving Ashby** (gtr); **Callender** (bass); **Chico Hamilton** (drs). 1946. Hollywood.

(c) (do., do.)—Young (tr); **Eesley Jones** (pno); **Curds Counce** (bass); **Johnny Otis** (drs). 1946. Hollywood.

(d) (do., do.)—Young (tr); **Gene Di Novo** (pno); **Chuck Wayne** (gtr); **Curley Russell** (bass); **Tiny Kahn** (drs). November, 1947. New York.

(e) (do., do.)—Young (tr); **Argonne** "Dense" Thornton (pno); **Freddy Lacey** (gtr); **Tex Briscoe** (bass); **Roy Haynes** (drs). 29/12/1947. Chicago.

(f) (Am. Norgran, no numbers available)—Young (tr); **Barney Kessel** (gtr); **Ray Brown** (bass); **J. C. Heard** (drs). Circa 1953 or '54. U.S.A.

(g) (do., do.)—Young (tr); **John Lewis** (pno); **Joe Shulman** (bass); **Bill Clark** (drs). Circa 1953 or '54. U.S.A.

(h) (do., do.)—Young (tr); unidentified pno, bass, drs. Circa 1953 or '54. U.S.A.  
Note: *New Lester Leaps In* and *She's Funny That Way* available also on Vogue V2362.

As I pointed out last month when reviewing the 78 release of *New Lester Leaps In* and *She's Funny*, Lester Young is a soloist whose performances vary widely in quality. This is borne out again by both the above records. The Vogue issue—all from sessions between 1945 and 1947—has four titles on which Lester, accompanied by Joe Albany, Irving Ashby, Red Callender and Chico Hamilton, is at his best—particularly in the lyrical, inventive version of *You're Driving Me Crazy*, although on several of the other tracks he plays very raggedly.

The Columbia record starts off with four rather weary interpretations of standard slow ballads—all well below Lester's normal standards—and it is the second side which matters. *Count Every Star*, *It All Depends On You*, *September In The Rain* (some fine John Lewis piano on all these) and *Slow Motion Blues* are five-star performances. On these Lester's phrasing is muscular and imaginative, his tone full of light and shade.

E.J.

# CONTINENTAL RECORDS

By LILIAN DUFF

It must be twenty years since **Charles Trenet** delighted me with his first big hit, *Boum!* Since then he has given us other songs I have liked even better—*Les Enfants s'ennuient le Dimanche*, *La Polka du Roi* and *La Mer*, for example. I must confess, though, that in recent years I've found him a bit repetitious: too often his material has been tuneful but commonplace.

It's with all the more pleasure, therefore, that I welcome quite the best record of the month, his *Java du Diable* (Col. DCF153). The idea is amusing. The Devil writes a Java, it sweeps the world, and naturally it causes trouble. Dignified statesmen expounding policy suddenly break into "one—two—three—four"; a famous actor playing "L'Aiglon" disconcerts his audience in the same odd way; a conductor of Bach finds the same insidious rhythm irresistible. Bankers are confused in their figures and ruined, and the whole world is in a bad way when the Devil discovers that he can't collect royalties and in a huff takes the song back to hell. This *jeu d'esprit* is coupled with *Moi j'aime le music-hall*. Though not as original, this is a graceful little tribute to fellow artists like Chevalier, Edith Piaf, Juliette Greco and Gilbert Bécaud.

Other issues include French versions of songs already known in English, such as *Amour, Castagnettes et Tango* (Parlo. DPP38), familiar as "Hernando's Hideaway", sung by **Lucienne**

**Delye**. *L'Etranger au Paradis* (H.M.V. JOF115), from "Kismet", sung by **Gloria Lasso**. and *Va Mon Coeur*, known to us as "Wake the Town and Tell the People" (H.M.V. JOF116), sung by **Yvette Giraud**. On the other side of the last-named is something that will amuse parents—*Choisis ton Métier*, in which Mlle Giraud and a small boy called Rodolphe discuss the picturesque careers he fancies.

The thing I remember best about "Luciano Tajoli at San Remo" (Parlo. LP CPMB1) is the charming cover view of this resort, all the more attractive for being distant. Is this unfair both to San Remo and the singer? Perhaps. At 35 Signor Tajoli can look back on fifteen years of popularity: he is an established star of theatre, films, radio and records. His admirers praise his voice, his talent for improvisation, his generosity to other artists and his modesty. All of which makes me feel a little guilty, because I find his light thin tenor rather unappealing. Here he sings a selection from the entries at this year's festival at San Remo, including the three prize-winners. These are *Aprite le Finestre*, *Amami se Vuoi* and *La Vita è un Paradiso di Bugie*. They might be described not too unfairly as pleasant but undistinguished. I preferred *Lucia e Tobia*, possibly for the dubious reason that it reminded me a little of *O Giucciarello*.

knowledge I may have. Indeed, my wife says that I am often stupid and usually vexation in the way in which I litter up her lounge floor with bits and pieces whilst I am connecting up. On this occasion, however, there was no hitch of any kind from start to finish. All the connections are quite easy to make by means of what electricians call "chocolate strips" and every point is clearly numbered and coded. The system is perhaps not so compact as plug-in sockets but it is just as simple and possibly more positive. Anyhow, I had no contortions with screws in awkward places or at awkward angles. Moreover, all the instructions were both clear and patient.

All went well, and I connected up the loudspeaker and switched on, first of all, of course, with volume control at zero and tone controls fully anti-clockwise. The response was immediate—but it came from my wife: "Oh, how lovely!" She was referring to the effect of the indirect edge lighting of the control unit: there was no sound as yet. So I turned over to Rad 2 on the Selector Switch to which my F.M. unit was connected and gingerly turned up the volume control. Then round to Rad 1 for the A.M. unit and over to pickup and microphone. Everything O.K. Back I came then to the F.M. transmission, and we started to listen critically. Here are a few of our preliminary observations:

(1) Hum inaudible even with volume control full out (but gain control on F.M. unit at minimum). Only at full bass boost could we just detect it.

(2) Enormous bass power available.

(3) Bass quality and definition maintained at both high and low power. Within the limit of the volume which my 300 sq. ft. lounge will stand, I could not detect any sound of overloading.

(4) On the other hand, I could set the bass control so that the double basses remained audible even when the overall volume was quite low.

(5) There was plenty of margin, too, on the treble control—but I must confess that I usually find myself attenuating treble a little on all amplifiers.

(6) With Selector set to pickup and pickup connected but not playing, hum became audible just before full output, but I found that was due to a fault in my screening, and not to anything in the amplifier. This, in its turn, suggested to me how wise it was to have a pickup matching unit incorporated in the Control Unit.

Since I connected up the amplifier we have stayed up until the small hours on several occasions, playing through my records again, old and new. I have never worked the amplifier to anything like its full limit, but somehow one becomes thankful to have a big reserve in hand. I found the six positions for records on the Selector quite useful when playing older recordings. For recent (post 1954) records the LP and 78 R.I.A.A. position

## TECHNICAL REPORTS

By P. WILSON, M.A.

**The A-Z Senior Amplifier.** Sound Sales Ltd., Farnham, Surrey. Price £40.

### Specification.

#### Main Amplifier:

Output: 20 watts constant from 20 to 20,000 c/s.

Peak Output: 30 watts.

Response: Flat from 10 to 30,000 c/s.

Damping Factor: Better than 55.

Negative Feedback: 25 db at 20 to 20,000 c/s.

Valves: GZ34 Rectifier; 2 of EL34 Output; 12AT7 Cathode coupled phase splitter; EF86 amplifier.

Size: 14½ in. long by 8½ in. deep by 8½ in. high.

#### Main Amplifier and Control Unit:

Distortion (both units): Less than 0.05 per cent for 20 watts.

Hum: Better than 80 db at 20 watts.

Sensitivity: 5 millivolts for 20 watts (microphone input).

Extra Power: 250 volts at 40 m.a., 300 volts at 15 m.a. (two points switched by selector) at Rad 1 and Rad 2, 6.3 volts at 5 amps.

Pick-up Sensitivity Matching: Three position—10 m.v., 50 m.v. and 100 m.v. (with equaliser for crystal pickups).

#### Control Unit:

Input Selector: 12 position switch covering Records: 78 Brit, 78 ffr, 78 and LP, R.I.A.A., 78 NAB and LP, LP Decca, LP HMV.

Microphone: (Sensitivity 5 m.v.).

Radio 1 and Radio 2 (Sensitivity 100 m.v.).

Tape Record: (Two positions corresponding to Rad. 1 and Rad. 2).

Tape Playback: (Sensitivity 250 m.v.).

Tone Controls: Bass—0 to + 18 db at 30 c/s.

Treble—minus 16 db at 10,000 c/s., 24 db at 20,000 c/s. Plus 13 db at 10,000 c/s., 16 db at 20,000 c/s.

Rumble and Bass Filter: 3 position switch: —5 db at 10 c/s.; 5 db at 40 c/s., —13 db at 20 c/s.; and 5 db at 100 c/s., —13 db at 40 c/s.

H.F. Filter: Steep cut at 4 kc/s, 7 kc/s. or 9 kc/s. with Off position.

Volume control

Valves: 3 of EF86.

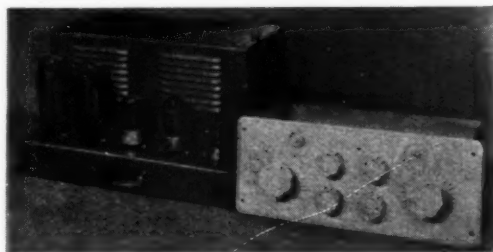
Size: Front panel over flanges—11½ in.

Depth behind panel—6 in. Height—4½ in.

Finish: Cream with red engravings, protected by perspex sheet which is edge lighted by twin dial lights.

This 20 watt Ultra Linear Amplifier and Control Unit is the latest development from the Farnham laboratories, following on the spectacular success in the redesign of the Junior Amplifier. I am informed that it is based on a design which was recently produced for the B.B.C. It is certainly the most comprehensive combination that has yet come my way.

As is my usual practice, I spent quite a while reading the Instruction Book and then adapting my standard cabinet to take the amplifier, the control unit and two radio tuners (AM and FM) in the sort of condition that I should expect any ordinary purchaser to have to adopt. In doing this I try not to draw upon any specialised



# OLYMPIC HONOUR FOR BRITAIN

We are proud to announce that our TL/12 amplifiers have been chosen for use at the 1956 Olympic Games to be held in Australia.

It was in 1945 that H. J. Leak revolutionised the performance standards for audio amplifiers by designing the original "Point One" series, and we became the first firm in the world to market amplifiers having a total distortion content as low as 0.1 per cent. This claim was received with incredulity, but it was subsequently confirmed by the National Physical Laboratory and since then hundreds of TL/12 amplifiers have been used by the B.B.C., and Commonwealth and foreign broadcasting authorities, and thousands have been used by recording studios, leading musicians and music-lovers throughout the world. We were the only British exhibitors at the world's first Audio Fair which was held in New York in 1949 and the volume of our exports to the United States of America has grown steadily since then.

Further development work resulted in our producing, at a much lower price but with the same high performance standards, the TL/10 amplifier. The TL/10 amplifier and "Point One" pre-amplifier received such an excellent reception when they were first exhibited at the Audio Fair in New York in October, 1953, that we received an initial order for 1,000 sets. Since then several thousand sets have been sold throughout the world. The output of the TL/10 is ample for high-fidelity home music systems, and the quality of reproduction obtained is equal in every respect to that of the TL/12. We always use the TL/10 amplifier and "Point One" pre-amplifier for our public demonstrations of high-fidelity reproduction of gramophone records and radio. The TL/10 amplifier, when used with the best available complementary equipment, gives to the music-lover a quality of reproduction unsurpassed by any equipment at any price. Even when the complementary equipment falls below that of the best obtainable, the use of these amplifiers will enable one to obtain very marked improvements in reproduction.



HIGH FIDELITY  
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## SPECIFICATION

### Circuitry

A triple loop feedback circuit based on the famous TL/12. The output transformer is the same size as in the TL/12.

Maximum power output : 10 watts.

Frequency response :  $\pm 1$  db 20 c/s to 20,000 c/s.

Harmonic distortion : 0.1% 1,000 c/s, 7.5 watts output.

Feedback Magnitude : 26 db, main loop.

Damping Factor : 25.

Hum : -80 db referred to 10 watts.

Loudspeaker Impedances : 16 ohms, 8 ohms, and 4 ohms.

### Other Leak products :

Varislope II pre-amplifier ... ..	£16.16.0	
TL/12 power amplifier ... ..	£28. 7.0	
TL/25A power amplifier ... ..	£34. 7.0	
Leak dynamic pickup : Arm ... ..	£2.15.0	p.t. £1.3.1
LP head with diamond stylus ... ..	£5.15.0	p.t. £2.8.4
78 head with diamond stylus ... ..	£5.15.0	p.t. £2.8.4
Mumetal cased transformer ... ..	£1.15.0	
Trough-Line FM tuner unit with built-in power supply ... ..	£25. 0.0	p.t. £10.10.0

Those seeking to obtain the highest quality of gramophone and radio reproduction are invited to ask their dealer for a demonstration of Leak products which, with their tradition of excellence, represent the best that can be obtained.

### "POINT ONE" PRE-AMPLIFIER

The handsome gold escutcheon plate contributes to the elegant appearance, and blends with all woods.

#### ★ Pickup

The pre-amplifier will operate from any pickup generally available in the world. A continuously variable input attenuator at the rear of the pre-amplifier permits the instantaneous use of crystal, moving-iron and moving-coil pickups.

#### ★ Radio

The radio input sockets at the rear permit the connection of the LEAK V.S. tuner unit. An input attenuator is fitted. H.T. and filament supplies are available from the pre-amplifier.

#### ★ Distortion

Of the order of 0.1%.

#### ★ Hum

Negligible, due to the use of recently developed valves and special techniques.

#### ★ Input selector

Radio, tape, records; any and all records can be accurately equalised.

#### ★ Treble

Continuously variable, + 9 db to - 15 db at 10,000 c/s.

#### ★ Bass

Continuously variable + 12 db to - 13 db at 40 c/s.

#### ★ Volume Control and Switch

The switch controls the power supply to the TL/10 power amplifier.

#### ★ Tape Recording Jacks

An exclusive feature. Readily accessible jacks are provided on the front panel for instantaneous use with Tape Recorders which have built-in (low-level) amplifiers.

### ELECTROSTATIC LOUDSPEAKERS

Reprints of "The Gramophone" article (May, 1955), by H. J. LEAK, summarising his work and findings on Electrostatic and Dynamic Loudspeakers, are available on request free of charge.

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Then there are the children. Your little boy is learning the piano. Like any other little boy he makes mistakes and hates criticism. Come to think of it he doesn't like practising much either. But a tape recorder makes it fun. You can record him and play it back and it will tell him just what went wrong—quite impersonally. You'll find he'll accept it from the tape recorder—and enjoy "getting it right next time".



Your eldest girl is in the school play. You've no idea how much easier it is to "learn lines" with a tape recorder. Of course, professional actors use them for the same reason. Schools use them too—thousands of schools, all over the country.

But a tape recorder is by no means confined to cultural ends, worthy as they are. It can be downright jolly entertainment at parties and so on. And the "family album" of sound that you'll build up over the years will be worth its weight in gold.



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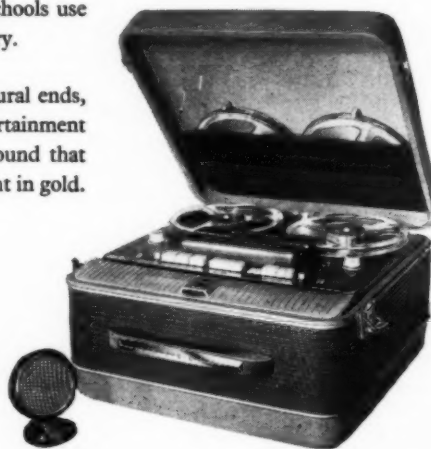
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(engraved as LP and 78 on the panel) is almost always correct. By the way, it is often useful to try one of the LP positions in conjunction with a treble boost and a treble filter when playing some of the early, scratchy 78 r.p.m. records. English Columbias recorded between 1926 and 1931 need a different treatment from the others; they respond to a 2-mil. stylus (others 3-3½ mil.) and more treble attenuation (LP-NAB) but a higher cut-off (7 kc/s instead of 4 kc/s).

The rumble filter I have not been able to check fully, since my own turntables give no audible rumble. But the specification and a trial with constant note records show that it would be a particularly vicious rumble that could force its way through and the remedy would be to get rid of the offending turntable as soon as possible. (Perhaps that is really wise in all cases). The main value of this control is to deal with the occasional examples of recording rumble. It is also an advantage to use the "maximum" filter position when playing pre-war recordings, either electric or acoustic.

I must also commend, once again, the inclusion of the tape switches in the main Selector. It is such a convenience to be able to connect up a tape recorder permanently and to do all the changing from record to playback on the Selector Switch. At present one must use a complete Tape Recorder and take-off for Playback from the High Impedance connection. But a little bird has whispered to me that very soon there will be a Tape Deck plug Pre-amplifier (and Oscillator) on the market which one could use with a High Fidelity Amplifier such as this.

In short, this amplifier will do full justice to any pickup, any tuner, any microphone, any tape deck and any loudspeaker system. And the wife says, "Oh! How lovely!" What more could one want?

#### Hartley-Turner "315" Loudspeaker. H. A.

Hartley & Co. Ltd., Woolwich. Price 10 gns.

##### Specification:

Power capacity: 15 watts peak.  
Flux density: 14,000 Gauss.  
Impedance: 4 or 15 ohms, to order.  
Surround resonance: 30 c/s.  
Frequency range: 25 c/s.—15 k.c/s.  
Overall diameter: 12½ in.  
Overall Depth: 6½ in.

I remarked when I reviewed the "215" unit some time ago that it was one of the most interesting units I had ever come across. I can truthfully say the same about this larger version which is built upon the same principles but with one major point of difference, apart from size. Thus, the coil is wound on a flexible sheath over an aluminium former, following the Barker Duode practice; the cone has a particularly free mounting so that the fundamental resonance is very low and, what is more, it is not at all pronounced whatever the form of cabinet; and the cone itself is divided into two distinct portions. But whereas in the "215" the change from one portion to the other was by means of a curve of inflexion, here it is by a separate plastic coupling.

The centre pole (and therefore the coil diameter) is unusually small for an all-range speaker of this size. The reason for this, I suppose, is to keep the treble efficiency up and this it certainly does—the quality is distinctly more "brilliant" than with the "215". But I should have expected it to weaken the bass a little as compared, say, with a 12 in. unit with a 1½ in. coil; and this I do not find at all. Indeed, one of the most pleasing features about the unit is its relatively strong and smooth response up to about 600-700 c/s. Curiously enough, therefore, it is exceedingly good as a low frequency unit in a multiple speaker system.

It is at its best on an infinite baffle (which is perhaps not so surprising since it was designed to go with the "Baffle") but it is no mean performer in quite a small bass reflex cabinet provided the latter is adequately damped. I used a 5 cubic ft. cabinet with an internal neck made up of egg trays and a vertical screen of egg trays a few inches from the back.

In those circumstances I got very good treble results, too. The response between 1,000 c/s. and 5,000 c/s. was distinctly better than the makers' curve would have led me to think possible. There was still some discontinuity at about 2,000 c/s., but it was not offensive to the ear.

It is therefore quite a pleasant all-range unit. But that does not alter my conclusion that its major virtue is the excellent response below 600 c/s. If therefore you need a unit to be used as a single all-range speaker for the time being with a view to adding a tweeter and perhaps a middle range unit later when funds permit, the "315" is certainly a speaker to put on your list.

## TECHNICAL TALK

### More about Stylus

They say that "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend". But they don't seem to be mine! Or do they? Hardly had I made the suggestion that some knowledgeable person should set to work to design a diamond stylus assembly which should not have greater mass or fixing compliance than a standard sapphire mounting, than I get two or three communications to say that it has been done.

In the first place, both Fred Smith of Rimingtons and a letter from Messrs. Goodsell of Brighton tell me that a diamond stylus in a form recommended by the designer of the pickup can now be supplied with the Ortofon, so I hope before long to make a supplementary report on that wonder pickup.

Secondly, Mr. Myers of Goldring rang me up a week or two ago to say that, spurred on by my original note, they had set to work and produced a design for a diamond stylus which dispensed with a mounting sheath and thus enabled the diamond stylus assembly to be lighter than the corresponding sapphire assembly. He says that as a result the range of response of the Goldring 500 is now the same with a diamond as with a sapphire. Which means, of course, that it is very good indeed. I still hold to my opinion (confirmed as it was by the American Consumers Union Reports) that, when mounted and used so as to have minimum tracking error and minimum side pressure, the Goldring 500 will stand comparison with the best pickups of any kind and at any price. Some moving-coil pickups, such as the Ortofon, are more kind to such defects of mounting, but that is no reason why the defects should ever be tolerated.

### The Viciousness of Side Pressure

In my forthcoming *Gramophone Handbook*, which Messrs. Methuens tell me they hope to have available early in September, I have devoted quite a lot of space to the practical questions relating to the mounting of pickups and pickup arms and turntables, which so far as I know are not to be found in any other book, or in any manufacturer's instruction leaflet. Yet it is easy to demonstrate, both practically and theoretically, that careful attention here is just as important for avoidance of record wear and for quality reproduct on as the maintenance of a good stylus point. It is certainly the answer to nearly all the queries that have been raised about "end of side distort on". So I hope I may be forgiven if in the next few instalments

of Technical Talk I repeat some of the hints and tips I have given more fully in the Handbook.

### End of Side Distortion

Let us be quite clear about the origin of this form of distortion to start with. It is not a vice of the recording engineer but is inherent to some degree in lateral-cut disc recording. It is in fact an aggravated form of "tracing distortion" and is due to the difficulty which a reproducing stylus of finite dimensions has in exactly following the wiggles of the recording stylus. Yes, it is all as simple (and as impossible) as that.

The aggravation occurs because at the inner grooves of a disc the linear speed of the groove under the stylus is only about ½ of what it is at the outer grooves and the undulations are therefore packed into a much smaller space.

It is easy in fact to show that on a 33½ r.p.m. microgroove record a pure tone of frequency over 10,000 c/s, recorded at a radius of 2½ in., cannot possibly be followed accurately by a stylus of standard dimensions. But that does not mean, as has often been assumed, that frequencies of that order are not reproduced. In any musical recording the tones of high frequency sometimes combine with tones of lower frequency to produce a groove contour of easy curvature and in such circumstances they may be well reproduced. But they don't always combine in that way and then tracing difficulties may be quite pronounced.

Now the effect of such difficulties is not just the missing out of a few high notes. If it were, the matter would not be so important, for the human ear does not miss what it does not hear so much as it resents what it does hear and does not want to. A piece of reproduction will still seem to have a long range if the high (and low) notes are only sometimes audible. No, tracing distortion is not just a sin of omission of part of the range: it is the positive production of spurious tones throughout the range; it is a peculiar form of intermodulation distortion, and once that has been created it cannot be eliminated by any device at a later stage in the reproducing system.

Now even if the record groove were on a plastic tape moving in a straight line under the reproducing stylus at a 40 in./sec. speed (which corresponds to the speed at the outside of a 78-r.p.m. record) a certain amount of tracing distortion would be inevitable owing to the difference in shape between the recording stylus that cut the groove in the original disc and the reproducing stylus. The former has a flat cutting face and the latter a circular surface section, and the points of contact with the walls of the groove only exactly correspond at the peaks of a wave and, of course, at points where there is no groove modulation. This is easily seen from the figure below.

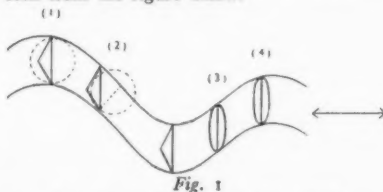


Fig. 1

Only at positions such as (1) are the points of contact of a stylus of circular section the same as those of the recording stylus. At position (2) stylus has to rise in the groove and points of contact are displaced.

It is also seen that there would be a closer correspondence if the section of the reproducing stylus were elliptical with its longer axis across the groove, and that the tracing error would be worse if the longer axis were along the groove, as it would be in the case of a trailing stylus. In the former case, however, the wear on the

stylus would be much more rapid. My friend Mr. C. E. Watts has suggested as the result of his experiments in the photo-micrography of grooves and styli that a more suitable shape of stylus would be that shown in Fig. 2.

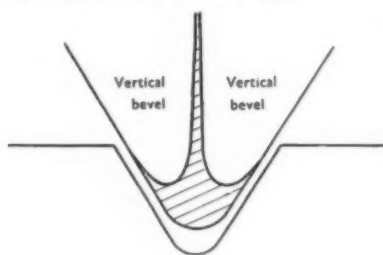


Fig. 2

### Faulty Alignment

This, it seems to me, would be undoubtedly true for a straight line groove on a plastic tape provided the stylus were accurately aligned in the groove. But I am not so sure that the result would be everything we should like in the case of a spiral groove on a disc record with a pickup mounted on a swinging tone arm where errors of alignment (tracking errors) and side pressure begin to take their toll. It is true that both these faults can be made almost negligible but they very rarely are. Indeed, the standards for tone-arm setting that have been widely quoted in recent years do not give the optimum conditions. Thus, the "tentative international standard" that "has been promulgated for pickup arms in domestic reproducers, with centres of 7 in. from pickup arm pedestal to turntable centre, 0.6 in. overhang and an offset angle of 26 degrees" (quoted by Kelly, *Hi-Fi Year Book*, p. 53), is decidedly not the best arrangement even for 7 in. centres; and anyone who uses 7 in. centres in these days deserves what he gets.

I will go into this question of alignment once again in my next article (I discussed it very fully in these pages in September and October, 1924 and again in April, 1930). But in the meantime I will state categorically that I have come across many more badly mounted carrying arms during the past year than good ones.

### Dynamic Levelling

In the matter of side pressure the current position is even worse. Many, people even amongst well-informed technical folk, have the impression that side pressure is caused by mounting the arm so that the stylus will overhang the spindle. That is quite wrong. Side pressure would be present, *ceteris paribus*, even if there were no overhang, whenever a swinging carrying arm (of any type) is used: it is due to the fact that the line joining the back pivot to the stylus is not, and cannot be, tangential to the mean line of the groove. The magnitude of the side pressure is a function of the angle between those lines, and when the optimum conditions are chosen to secure minimum tracking error, that magnitude is almost the same for every position of the stylus across the record.

In these circumstances, side pressure due to the traverse of the pickup across the record can always be corrected by a system of *dynamic levelling*. It very rarely is even in High Fidelity equipment.

So I am bold enough to assert that the large majority of people, including most Hi-Fi fans, are at this moment wearing their records and producing more intermodulation distortion than they need. And in my view it is just plain foolish to spend large sums on delicate pickups and styli so as to reduce the pressures on the record produced by the actual playing, and at the same time to tolerate conditions which produce a large, *standing* side-pressure.

### Wear of Styli

Similarly, since records are so expensive, I believe it to be foolish to economise in styli. This does not necessarily mean using diamonds in preference to sapphires, though I always prefer a good diamond simply because it lasts longer and therefore the risks of not changing it soon enough are *pro tanto* smaller. But note that good diamond styli are more rare at present than good sapphires. Unfortunately there is no sure way for the ordinary user to tell when a stylus is just beginning to be worn too much, for that stage has been reached some time before one notices a falling off in the quality of reproduction: by that time the record is worn too. The counsel of perfection is to get into the habit of regularly examining the stylus through a high-powered magnifying glass, and to change the stylus whenever a flat of, say, 0.0005 in. becomes apparent. But that obviously involves a certain expertise which can only be expected of the small minority. The alternative is to change the stylus in good time.

Assuming that the playing conditions are such that there is minimum tracking error, negligible static side-pressure and a playing weight of 7 grms., I should estimate the safe life of a good sapphire as 25 hours and that of a good diamond as 1,000 hours.

All this means, of course, that styli should be produced (or sold) much more cheaply than at present. I have made some inquiries about the production costs of artificial sapphires and as a result am persuaded that, if the demand were properly regulated so that everyone changed as often as they ought, a replacement sapphire, including cantilever, should not cost more than 2/6 retail. What the corresponding cost of a diamond should be I cannot estimate at present.

### New idea in pickup cartridges

I see, however, that a more advanced idea has begun to take hold in America, at any rate for the more popular instruments. This is to make the pickup cartridge so inexpensive that the whole thing can be thrown away as soon as the styli have worn, and a new cartridge substituted.

I have before me as I write recent samples of these new Electrovoice cartridges. They are quite tiny—about  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. long and  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. diameter—and are assembled with a pair of electrical contacts and two sapphire styli. The latter can both be 1 mil. styli for microgrooves or one can be a microgroove stylus and the other a standard stylus. The cartridge element is one of the modern "ceramics" and it is claimed that a level frequency response up to 10 kc/s with more than 250 millivolts output can be obtained from a microgroove record. It can be plugged in to an ingenious shell which is permanently mounted on the carrying arm.

I understand that a company known as E.V. Ltd. has been formed to manufacture the cart idge over here; and that this new company has absorbed our old friend Sapphire Bearings Ltd. (which has been so prolific in the production of sapphire styli), and has become a subsidiary of the enterprising industrial group known as Camp Bird which at the moment seems to be making Stock Exchange history. There seems therefore to be a prospect of exciting activity, particularly as it also seems likely that special moves will soon be made to produce diamond styli more cheaply and more consistently.

I have not yet been able to get down to the testing of these E.V. cartridges, but I can say at once that I am much impressed by the ingenuity, yet practical character, of their design.

### The B.S.R.A. Exhibition

I was abroad at the time of this exhibition and must therefore apologise for not being able to give a proper report. I am told however,

that there was one interesting surprise: the demonstration by Connoisseur (A. R. Sugden Ltd., of Brighouse) of an experimental stereophonic disc record. I gather that the recording is a development of Blumlein's original idea of combining lateral and end-on-and-dale in one groove. I have known for some time that experiments were being carried out on these lines (but by other people) and well over a year ago I myself actually thought out a design for a pickup with a single stylus to produce such records. But I did not know that Arnold Sugden had also applied his acute mind to the problem. I hope I may be in a position to report further on the idea before long.

### Amateur Sound Recording

It would not seem to be generally known that an annual international competition is held to select, within various categories, the best amateur sound recording of the year. In previous competitions no entries have been received from this country, which is a great pity. However, this year the B.S.R.A. are anxious to remedy this and invite those interested to apply to Mr. H. G. Houlgate, 12 Strongbow Road, London, S.E.9, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, for full details.

## CORRESPONDENCE

*The Editor does not necessarily agree with any views expressed in letters printed. Address: The Editor, THE GRAMOPHONE, The Glade, Green Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.*

### Unesco Issues

In the criticism of the Unesco-sponsored records (Dallapiccola, Delage and Guarnieri) on page 19 of the June issue, your reviewer made quite a slip of the pen in writing that "the mood of these *Canti* foreshadows the choruses of Malipiero's great opera, *Il Prigioniero* (1944-8)". He obviously intended to write Dallapiccola instead of Malipiero.

In the next-to-last paragraph of the same review, the writer says, "When one thinks what Unesco could have given us, of Nono, Henze or Boulez, one grows almost angry". May his near-anger subside with the news that, under the auspices of the International Music Council, the French firm of VEGA will soon be issuing a record devoted to the music of Boulez, Nono, Stockhausen and Webern, performed by first-rate musicians under the direction of Pierre Boulez. It will appear before August.

Paris, France.  
JOHN EVARTS,  
Associate Executive Secretary,  
International Music Council.

### Hi-Fi?

I have spent a great deal of time and money in assembling a so-called High Fidelity Music System. It consists of a chain of high-grade imported components properly matched and mounted.

A friend of mine has hooked up an even more impressive chain.

Another friend has indulged in an array of equipment so vast and beautiful that it can only be regarded as a kind of temple to the god Hi-Fi.

There is no doubt that the sounds produced by these machines are often very impressive, but to most ears, including mine, the treble is usually so buzzy and edgy that the awesome beauty of wide-range is seriously marred. Naturally, filters can chop out these bees, but then with the gloss off, the reproduction is back to where we were without those costly tweeters and magnetic pickups!

Is THIS then hi-fi?  
Sydney, Australia.

J. MYER.

### Dubbings for Collectors

Mr. Hemstock's letter (July issue) ignores the obvious disadvantages of LP dubbings of old vocal records:

(1) When studying vocal records, any distortion introduced between the original matrix and the final pressing, whether resulting in an "improvement" or not, is undesirable. Any desired modification in reproduction should be made by the gramophone amplifier controls, with the full knowledge of the listener.

(2) LP "recitals" of dubbings are no less intolerable than any other LP recital!

(3) Vocal collectors regard their records as permanent acquisitions. The delicate nature of vinylite renders it much more susceptible to irreparable damage. For this reason, even 78 r.p.m. pressings on vinylite are unpopular with collectors.

(4) From very favourable experience with many modern 78 r.p.m. pressings of old recordings (on Italian H.M.V.), I feel that complaints of "high surface" on old 78s are often due to slightly steamed copies. This condition is visually imperceptible, and this encourages the vendor to describe the record as "mint"!

Mr. Hemstock emphasises the high prices of 78 r.p.m. "originals". Excepting that this illustrates a preference for 78 r.p.m. pressings by the collector, this has no bearing on the question of dubbings and reissues. The important point is whether we are justified in expecting the companies to engage their technical resources to transfer old 78s to LP.

I suggest that the majority of vocal record collectors who are interested in old recordings prefer 78s (Mr. Hemstock's letter seems to admit this), and furthermore, these collectors have apparatus designed to get the best results from the old masterpieces.

In view of this, it seems clear that a request for direct pressings is more reasonable. The recent Irish McCormack reissue seems to me to be ideal, offering authenticity of direct pressings with maximum selectivity to the customer.

To forestall criticism, I hasten to add that I possess several LP transcriptions of early recordings. Some of these are good—but how much more satisfying it would have been if reissues of direct 78 r.p.m. pressings had been made available!

Quarry Bank, Staffs. R. T. RUSSELL.

### John McCormack

When writing in my Quarterly Review last month about the Irish H.M.V. reissues of John McCormack recordings, I was not aware that the full list of titles would be printed in the same number of *THE GRAMOPHONE*; they will be found on pages 75 and 76, in a series of advertisements inserted by Collectors Records of 90 Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin, a firm which, as I understand, took an effective part in the enterprise by guaranteeing a minimum sale. I have been able to hear rather more than half of the records in their new form, and have found almost all of these to be good, clean pressings. Sometimes the surface will begin to roughen towards the centre of a side, and one or two sides make a "swish" if played with too fine a diamond or sapphire point; but these are not serious faults. I learn also that Hayes do not at present contemplate making the series available in England; on the contrary, the Irish discs are likely to remain in the catalogue only for a limited period. This is doubtless due to the fact that many of them are American recordings; as soon as the break between E.M.I. and R.C.A. Victor becomes effective, i.e. in April 1957, each party will thenceforward own the rights to recordings made, at whatever

date, on its own side of the Atlantic. This, by the way, seems to be the answer to the point raised at the beginning of my Quarterly Review. London, N.W.1.

DESMOND SHAW-TAYLOR.

### Del Monaco

As a fervent admirer of Mario Del Monaco, I am, in writing this, prejudiced in his favour of course, but to me Opera is the most moving of all forms of musical expression. I have listened to and possess records of most of the leading artists past and present from Caruso onwards.

In my opinion Del Monaco has the greatest voice I have ever heard. He has an exciting quality about his voice quite unlike any other tenor. He is dynamic and his pronunciation and sense of drama make other tenors sound "watery" by comparison. He has without doubt the most powerful voice of all (a fact which seems to bother most critics) but for Opera I think it is very appropriate in most instances. Personally I love the majestic, ringing magnificence of his voice. Compare him to three great tenors of this century. Björling has a beautiful voice but it is lifeless and has none of the fire of Del Monaco. Gigli at his best was weak by comparison. Tagliavini is clear and sweet but has not such a manly voice.

I realise a critic's job is to criticise, but it irritates me the way their opinions are presented so dogmatically as fact. It is reasonable to assume that a reviewer's personal preferences will subconsciously colour his criticisms whether he admits this or not.

In *THE GRAMOPHONE*, July issue, Andrew Porter says that teasing letters are always coming in when a reviewer finds something to praise Del Monaco for. Since there are so many people in favour of this tenor and he is regarded as the "rage of Italy", the home Opera, it is logical to assume that we can't all be wrong.

As we all have but two ears (unless the reviewers are holding out on us and have another tucked away somewhere) it surely boils down to a matter of personal preference. What I, for instance, may think marvellous may very well leave someone else unmoved.

Quite frankly I could never imagine a music reviewer ever wholeheartedly enjoying anything; they are, if one can coin such an expression, "musically punch-drunk".

Worcester. DERIC JOHANSEN.

[We suggest that our correspondent gives closer attention to what reviewers actually say than his letter suggests. It is untrue to say that they never wholeheartedly enjoy anything; and Mr. Johansen seems to have very decided views about the shortcomings, as he sees it, of Björling and Gigli.—Ed.]

### Mozart Piano Concertos

Your critics have often remarked on the ill-fortune of Mozart's Piano Concertos, in the versions at present available.

Could we urge one of the English companies to make a start on a definite set of all the mature concertos, if possible with the same orchestra and conductor (and studio) throughout? No one who has heard the recent Third programme concerts can doubt the supremacy of the Haydn Orchestra in this field. Harry Newstone's tempi (the very point in which so many of the existing versions are so vexatious) are invariably ideal. No one, of course, surpasses Curzon in these wonderful works for musicianship plus the essential brilliance.

In any case where is the Haydn Orchestra, since its remarkable *Jupiter* debut? Its string tone and flexibility are unique. Yet it records once in a blue moon.

London, N.W.5. M. F. LEVEY.

### Dvorak's Wind Music

A correspondent writes chiding me gently for denying in my survey last month of recorded chamber music for wind instruments that Dvořák wrote any wind music. He is, I feel, right in counting as chamber music the enjoyable *Serenade in D minor* (Op. 44) for 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, double bassoon, 3 horns, 'cello, and bass. May I be allowed to draw readers' attention to Karl Haas's recording with his London Baroque Ensemble on Parlophone PMB1001, and to apologise for a mistake that is the less excusable in the pages of *THE GRAMOPHONE* as the work is dealt with in the *Master Musicians* book on Dvořák by none other than Alec Robertson.

London, W.8. JOHN WARRACK.

### Teresa Stich-Randall

Your reviewers have rightly pointed out the excellence of this soprano who has unfortunately been heard in this country only on records. This omission is one that our concert-organisers should soon remedy. In France she has lately been hailed as Schwarzkopf's probable successor and she has been the leading soprano at the Aix-en-Provence Festival for some years. Having heard her there and in Vienna it seems to me a great pity that she is not heard in the Festival Hall or at Covent Garden. Her performances on records as Nanetta and in the Mozart C Minor Mass—and now the D.T. Mozart recital—show us how much we missed when she was left behind to hold the fort in Vienna in 1954 when the Opera came to London.

Available in America or elsewhere there are performances of Bach solo cantatas, of *The Creation* and the Choral Symphony, though not, apparently, any complete Mozart opera role. These records should be issued here without delay and her first appearance should not be long delayed.

Cambridge. MAURICE HUSSEY.

### "Golden Discs"

The desire for gold is a human weakness; indeed with the high cost of records it is more of a necessity these days. But in one place it is not appreciated—on record labels. This appalling "stuff" has, I feel sure, been cursed many times by many gramophiles for many reasons, some of which I will endeavour to elaborate below.

(a) I find gold print on labels (particularly red labels) extremely difficult to read. When H.M.V. tossed up between red and black labels way back in 1930 (?) why, oh why, did they not decide upon the black? So much easier on the eyes, particularly with gold print! Tradition, I suppose. Very well, use red labels, but would tradition oppose the possibility of using black printing on red labels? Presumably. And now, to our dismay, this combination of colours has become popular with many other famous labels. Rex records used black printing on red labels for many years with great success.

(b) How many gramophiles like myself have purchased records (particularly LPs) only to find the gold dust imparted from the labels firmly embedded into the grooves? This shedding of gold particles made itself particularly evident in the case of Regal-Zonophone records whose name was to be seen appearing through a band of gold about one inch thick. The grooves were smothered with gold dust. Now from experience I have found that patent record cleansing fluids will not remove all this dust, and therefore feel that the reproduction of any passage thus affected will be impaired.

What a shame it is then, that while the recording techniques have advanced so much



during the last fifty years, the labels have been so sadly neglected. And this raises one final point:—

(c) We don't want the same "gen" on each side of a set of discs, i.e. artists, etc., repeated over and over again—dash it all we have taken the trouble to choose the records probably from half a dozen available recordings—we ought to remember all that; and ten to one there is some descriptive literature supplied which expounds all the necessary information more fully.

To sum up, then. Let us have an attractive label, Mr. Manufacturer, bearing the minimum amount of information (except for 78s which have no literature); let it be printed boldly in contrasting and easy-to-read colour schemes, and whatever happens, please stop using gold print.

Now I know what is meant by a "golden disc". No, I was never awarded one, but I have bought many, and feel confident that with the gold dust I have removed, it would have been easy to pay off the National Debt years ago.

Wilmslow, Cheshire.

W. G. KLOET.

## "The Gramophone" Exchange & Mart

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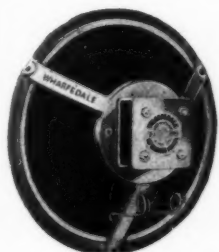
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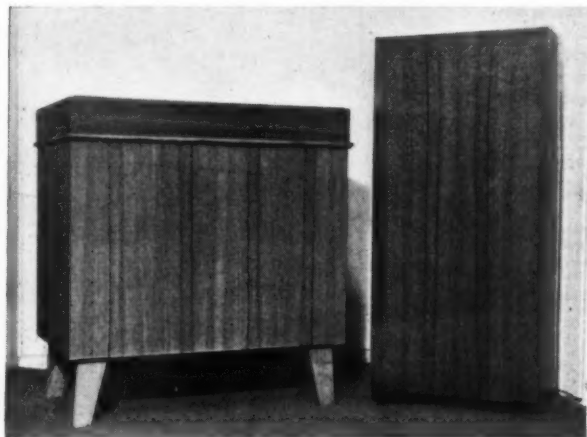
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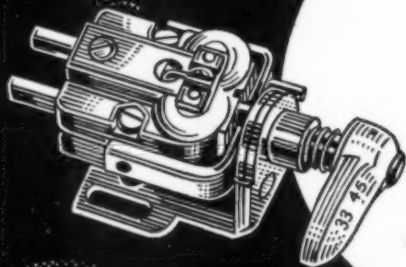
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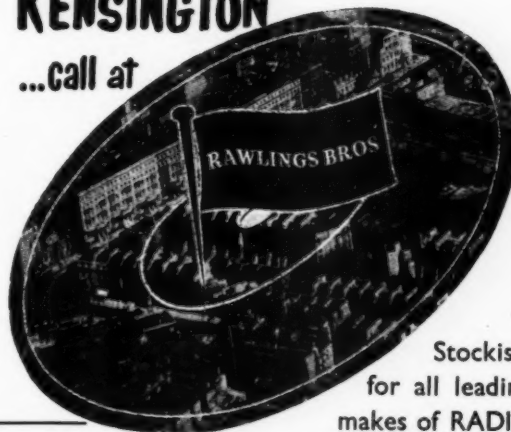
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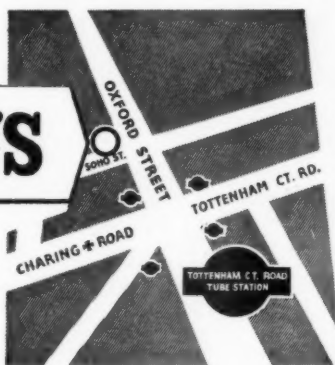
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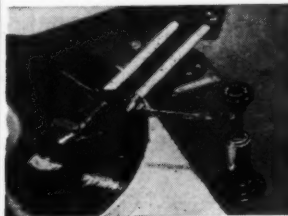
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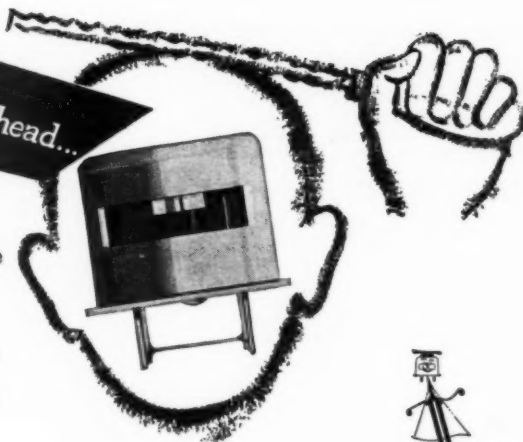
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LPH 65

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Speech coil diameter	1.5"

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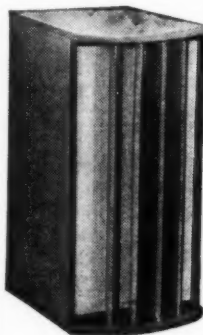
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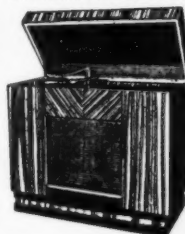
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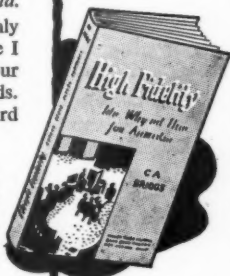
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